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Saturday February 24 1996

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Canada C 1.00	Italy I 2.00	Qatar Q 2.50
Denmark DK 1.50	Japan J 1.00	Romania R 2.00
France F 1.00	Korea K 1.00	Saudi Arabia S 1.00
Germany G 1.00	Latvia L 1.00	Slovenia S 1.00
Greece G 1.00	Lithuania LT 1.00	Spain S 2.00
Ireland I 1.00	Malta M 1.00	Sweden S 1.00
Israel I 1.00	Netherlands NL 1.00	Switzerland S 1.00
Italy I 2.00	Norway N 1.00	Taiwan T 1.00
Japan J 1.00	Poland P 2.00	Thailand B 1.00
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Spain S 2.00	Zimbabwe Z 1.00	

The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
46,484

Other lives

Return of the prodigal priest

Outlook page 15



Exclusive extract from his new book

Peter Mandelson: How Labour will change Britain

Outlook front



Interview

Prince of all the tortured souls

Outlook page 17

PM vows to see off his critics

Major claims survival hope despite Scott and defector

Michael White and Richard Norton-Taylor

JOHN Major last night batted down the hatches in the wake of the third defection from the Conservative ranks in five months, insisting that his government will weather Monday's Commons vote on the Scott Report — and survive into next year without a crisis election.

With his Commons majority reduced to a perilous two votes by Peter Thurnham's overnight rejection of the Tory whip, Mr Major was urged to stand firm by senior colleagues, led by his deputy, Michael Heseltine.

"I have always expected to go through to the spring of 1997 and I still expect to go through to the spring of 1997," Mr Major said as some jittery Tory MPs predicted an October poll. "I would personally advise him to go right through," Mr Heseltine said.

While Labour dispatched a letter to every Conservative MP calling on them "to stand up for the rights of Parliament" in Monday's Scott vote, Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown attacked what the Liberal Democrat leader called "a government which never apologises and a prime minister who never gets rid of anyone — until public opinion forces him".

Ministers gained some respite in the furore over the arms-to-Iraq controversy when the Master of the Rolls, Sir Thomas Bingham, became the most senior judge yet to intervene in support of the beleaguered Attorney General, Sir Nicholas Lyell.

Sir Thomas told BBC Radio 4's World at One that he thought Sir Richard's view on giving orders the controversial public interest immunity (PII) certificates, was "not one that all judges and practitioners would have shared".

Ministers are taking comfort from the PII row among legal experts.

Mr Thurnham, the Bolton North-east MP who quit in disgust after a private meet-

Reactions

"I had a lengthy conversation with Peter and Sarah last evening and we had a very friendly conversation, a very amiable conversation and we were going to meet again next week. I don't quite know what happened after I finished my meeting." — **John Major**

"It appears to be in a fit of pique." — **David Mellor**

"I think it is disgraceful." — **Bolton North East constituency chairman Norman Critchley**

"You've made a mistake." — **Michael Heseltine**

"John Major will need to be careful he doesn't let too many Tory MPs have an hour of his time." — **David Blunkett, shadow education secretary**

ing with Mr Major, twisted the knife with challenges to ministers to accept more of Sir Richard's proposals and prevent "such a debacle in the future".

In an article for the Guardian setting out the reasons for his resignation, the 57-year-old businessman accuses Mr Major of "starting to back-track quickly" over the Nolan report's recommendations on the disclosure of MPs' outside interests.

"And now there is Scott. Government ministers did their best to rubbish the Scott report before it had even been published. Once people did get a chance to read the report, it became clear it was an absolute can of worms," he writes.

The MP, whose decision to become an independent comes after Alan Howarth

joined Labour and Emma Nicholson joined the Liberal Democrats, faced criticism from colleagues and party activists. They said he had failed to find a safer seat on the "chicken run," a charge he called "rubbish".

Mr Heseltine said: "You've made a mistake." Mr Major told reporters: "I had a lengthy conversation with Peter and Sarah (his wife) last evening and we had a very friendly conversation... and we were going to meet again next week. I don't quite know what happened after I finished my meeting."

As it emerged that Mr Thurnham had been wooed by the Liberal Democrats, in private talks and dinner with the chief whip, Archie Kirkwood, there was speculation that he might be asked to be their candidate in Westmorland, the seat he failed to get. Tory whips discount the theory. "He's not a Liberal Democrat."

Mr Thurnham says his chief concern is Scott. "The more I read the Scott report, the more appalled I am. The Government is obviously minded not to take any action over Scott further than it needs to, and Monday's motion is a technical one, which they'll try to wriggle round," says Mr Thurnham whose strongest concern is over the use of PII certificates in the Matrix Churchill trial.

On this key point Christopher Muttukumar, the Scott inquiry secretary, last night asked the BBC to correct what he called a "misconception" in his interview with the Master of the Rolls. He pointed out that Sir Richard agrees in his report that PII claims could be made in a criminal case. But they should be based on the contents of particular documents. PII claims were made by ministers in the Matrix Churchill case covering documents regardless of content, including "innocuous communications between officials and between ministers and officials".

Martha Kettle, page 15; Peter Thurnham writes, page 17

Chief on Scottish safari finds uneasy head that wore the Xhosa crown



CHIEF Nicholas Gcaleka displays the skull that he found in a cottage in the Highlands of Scotland nine days after flying to Britain from South Africa in search of the head of Hintsa, a Xhosa king shot and subsequently mutilated by the British in 1835. The skull belonged until yesterday to the family of the Sutherland estate owner Charles Brooke. Mr Brooke had an ancestor who may have fought with the Seaforth Highlanders South Africa. The evidence that the skull is the king's may not be watertight by severe forensic standards, but Chief Gcaleka was clearly delighted by his discovery. Report, page 3

Mandelson urges state 'dowry' for couples

Michael White Political Editor

ABLAIR government should consider providing young couples with "a form of public dowry" in the shape of an interest-free loan worth up to £5,000 — as an incentive to marriage and the strengthening of family life, Peter Mandelson MP says in his new book.

The left has shunned the language of the family for a generation and needs to make it "a number one social priority" so that children can be raised knowing right from wrong — and "a sense of mutual obligation is founded and practised" — the Labour MP for Hartlepool writes in the book, called *The Blair Revolution*, which he co-wrote with ex-Liberal Democrat, Roger Liddle.

The book is being serialised in the Guardian today and next week. Among its proposals, which are an informal part of a broader attempt to provide intellectual underpinning to Blair's New Labour, is a device aimed at helping young couples who lack "a dowry financial start" from either their parents or their grandparents.

It could be called "Getting off to a good start", and would be subject to two criteria, the couple's family financial circumstances and their marital commitment, the authors suggest.

However, they state that it could be extended to those who "for reasons of their own reject the form of marriage".

The authors argue: "Access to a lump sum of, say, £5,000 would make an enormous difference at that stage of life. "One option that Labour

might investigate would be the provision of medium term, deferred repayment, interest-free loans to young couples without access to capital of their own — in effect a form of public dowry, available just once in a lifetime."

Mr Mandelson, who is the chairman of Labour's elections campaign committee and an influential adviser to Tony Blair, has offered free copies to Labour MPs, many of whom mistrust his role as a perceived bridge to Lib-Lab policies.

Though the book has been read by Blair staff, the Labour leader has not yet done so, party aides stressed last night.

It is not a ramp for Mr Blair's own ideas or his closest manifesto.

Blair's new Britain, Outlook, page 13

'Scapegoat' doctor wins libel damages of £625,000

Angela Johnson and Clara Dyer

AHOSPITAL consultant who claimed that the former Health Secretary, Virginia Bottomley, made his scapegoat after a patient's death to deflect public attention from bed shortages, won £625,000 libel damages yesterday against a newspaper which branded him "Dr Doltite".

Anthony Percy, a consultant orthopaedic surgeon at St Mary's hospital, in Sidcup, Kent, said he had been completely vindicated by the size of the award — the fifth highest by a libel jury — which has been condemned by some lawyers.

A High Court jury took six hours to decide that a series of articles published by the Daily Mirror last March and April wrongly blamed Mr Percy for the death of Malcolm Murray, aged 45.

But Charles Collier-Wright, legal manager of Mirror Group Newspapers, said he was extremely disturbed by the "completely absurd" verdict.

He added that the Court of Appeal, in a recent judgment which slashed damages awarded to the pop star Elton John, had given a clear indication of what judges could say in helping juries work out proper and sensible damages.

"In this case, the jurors Turn to page 3, column 1

BR cash errors rock sell-off

Simon Beavis Industrial Editor

TWO senior managers at a British Rail freight company have been suspended on the eve of its sale to an American firm. Two more managers are being investigated over errors involving up to £500,000.

Labour's transport spokesman, Brian Wilson, immediately called for an inquiry into the matter, the fourth case of financial irregularities to taint the Government's controversial rail privatisation.

Transport Secretary Sir George Young will officially hand over BR's three freight companies to Wisconsin Freight Transportation's head, Ed Birkhardt, at a London ceremony today.

But one, the Doncaster-based Loadhaul, confirmed last night that its finance director and the head of engineering had been put on "investigatory suspension" over "procedural irregularities".

Two other senior managers are under investigation over errors in freight contracts.

Mr Wilson, said last night: "Suddenly the privatisation ethos in the railways seems to have transformed standards of behaviour. It must be fully established whether these events are related to plans for the sell-off."

Loadhaul was created — with Mainline Freight and

BR cash errors rock sell-off

Transrail — out of BR's old Trainload Freight business to create competition. But the three were subsequently stitched back together when the Government said it would be prepared to accept single bids for all three.

The freight businesses are mainly involved with the movement of coal, iron ore, steel and aggregates.

Officials were stressing last night that the irregularities came to light during pre-sale audits of the business and would not impede the hand over of Loadhaul, Wisconsin had been made aware of the irregularities and the investigation.

A spokesman for British Rail said last night: "Errors have been found in the accounts of Loadhaul and they have been corrected. The necessary management action has been taken."

A spokesman at Loadhaul, which mainly moves freight around Humberside, Teeside and North Yorkshire, said that the two suspended directors had been asked to step aside during the investigation because it had arisen at a sensitive time close to the sale.

Wisconsin, which is based in Rosemont, Illinois, has already bought Rail Express Systems, the company that operates the Royal Train and the Royal Mail, as part of the rail sell-off programme. It was not available for comment last night.

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2 CHRONICLE/NEWS

Sarajevo police charm offensive

Julian Borger in Vogošca

DZEMAL TABAK and Vukja Skiplina had an extraordinary conversation on a Vogošca street corner yesterday. They asked after each other's health and talked about the weather. It was quite a step forward in the Bosnian peace process.

The commonplace exchange marked the first contact between a resident of the Serb suburbs of Sarajevo and the Bosnian Federation police who began patrolling Vogošca yesterday as part of the Dayton peace agreement.

Officer Tabak, a Muslim, was one of 30 policemen who arrived in the northern Sarajevo district just after dawn under Nato and United Nations police escort. A few dozen Serbs gaped as the green-uniformed police got off their buses and strolled into the neighbourhood.

They stood on the pavement nodding at passers-by, clasped their hands behind their backs, and occasionally directed some light traffic.

The Serbs were unsure what to make of it. Their leaders had warned them they would be slaughtered when Bosnian security forces moved in. Most had fled. Only a couple of thousand had remained, out of penury, stubbornness or indecision.

"I want to go and I want to stay," said Mrs Skiplina, aged 53. "I had a row with my husband yesterday. He said we would be killed, and he left. But I didn't want to leave. It's the only house we've got, and all my books are there."

Having chosen her library over her husband, she went out into the snow to face her new rulers. "If I was afraid, I

wouldn't be here in the first place," she said, and approached Mr Tabak.

"So you'll be staying here with us?" the policeman asked. "I'm not sure. I'll wait and see how things turn out."

"It will be okay. You'll see. The war is over. You can all live together again — Serbs, Muslims, Croats. We did before this war," Mr Tabak said. He and his colleagues had clearly been to a police charm school before being sent to Vogošca. But even the slightly forced decorum was encouraging. It suggested the government was finally making a sustained effort to reassure Sarajevo's Serbs.

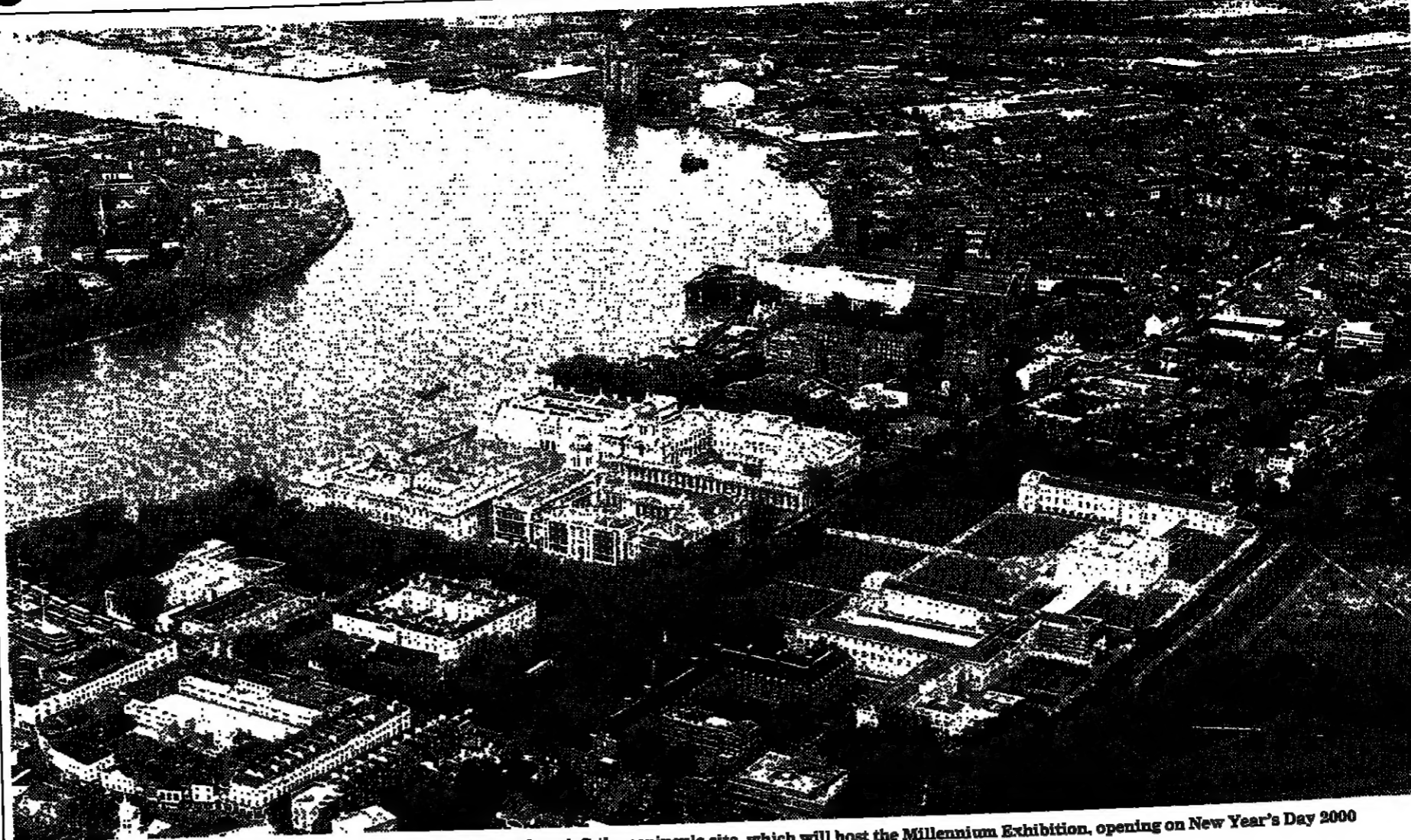
Under international pressure, the government found enough Serb policemen to ensure the force mirrors the suburb's pre-war ethnic composition. Of 65 officers assigned to Vogošca, 33 are Serbs from government-controlled Sarajevo.

They were watched by Irish, Polish and Portuguese officers from the UN's Interim Police Task Force (IPTF), which yesterday declared itself satisfied with the Bosnian performance.

The image of reconciliation was slightly marred by local Bosnian officials who in triumphalist mood pulled down the Serb flag and replaced it with the Bosnian Republic's fleur-de-lis.

The incoming officials — mainly Muslim — were furious at finding the police trashed by its Serb former occupants. In retaliation, they tried to evict the outgoing Serb mayor, despite an agreement that the Serb local authorities should remain until March 19.

Leader comment, page 14; Bosnia's black hole, page 23



Greenwich, with the National Maritime Museum on the right and top left the peninsula site, which will host the Millennium Exhibition, opening on New Year's Day 2000

Greenwich beats Birmingham in Millennium battle

Maev Kennedy Heritage Correspondent

GREENWICH has beaten out a challenge from Birmingham to stage the Millennium Exhibition in 2000 with a £700 million proposal involving a two-year exhibition with pavilions contributed by cities throughout the country, according to the Corporation of London.

Chairman for the corporation, said yesterday that the Environment Secretary, John Gummer, had confirmed to him that the Millennium Commission had chosen London over Birmingham. The commission is chaired by the Heritage Secretary, Virginia Bottomley, and includes the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, who is known to have favoured a London site.

However a commission spokeswoman insisted yesterday that the final decision had not been made. Reports that six cities will have linked exhibition projects were also premature, she said. Once the main site is announced the festival programme will be decided, and applications from the regions for pavilions invited.

The leader of the Greenwich bid, Sir Bob Scott, was cautious. "The signs are that it is good news for Greenwich, but we are not throwing our hats in the air until we hear it officially."

Unofficially, the NEC has been preparing for the worst since the chosen operator, the design consultancy Imaginix, which preferred the NEC site, was asked to draw up equally detailed plans for the Greenwich peninsula site.

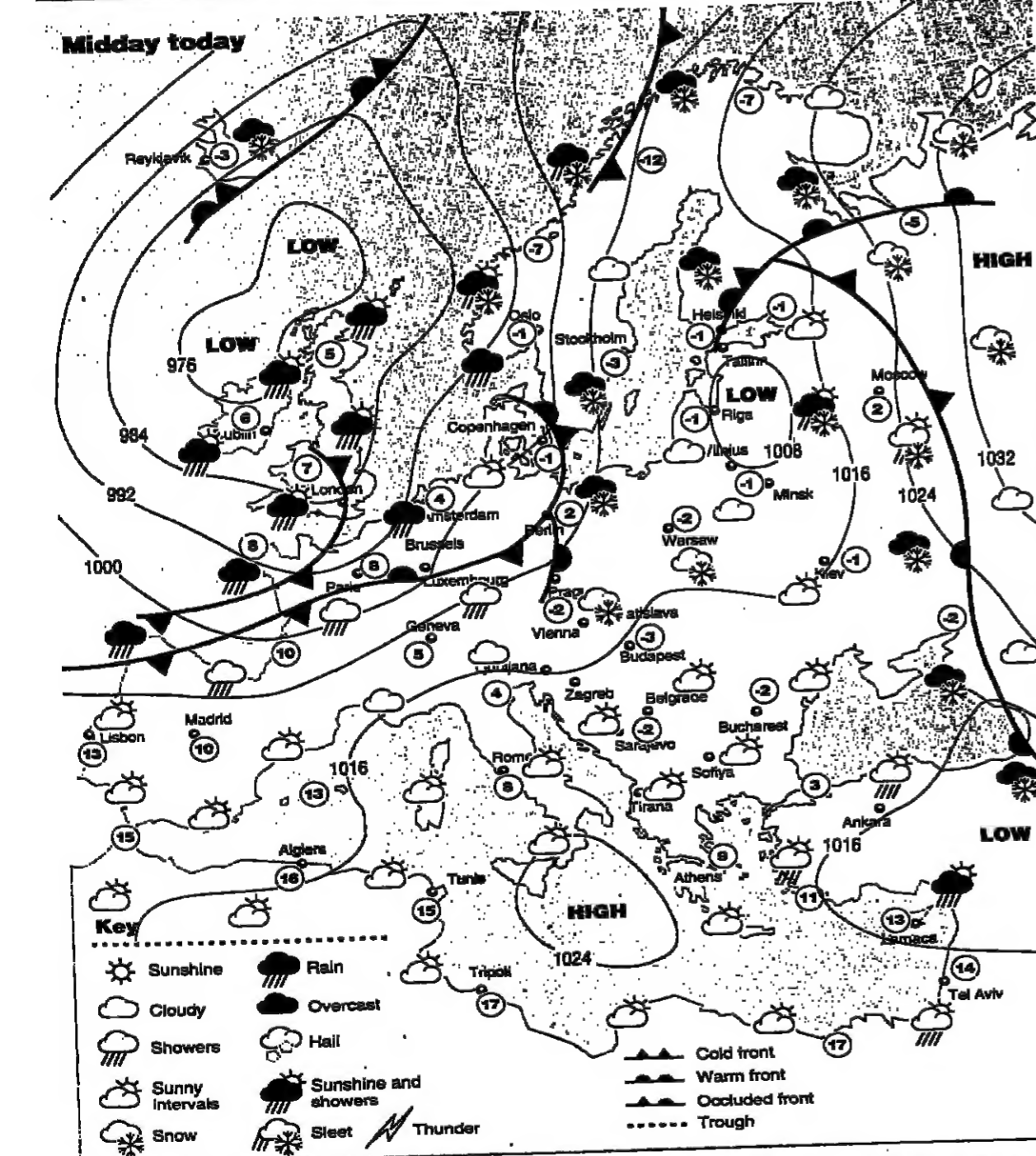
The Millennium Commission will provide a grant of up to £100 million towards the exhibition, which is to open on New Year's Day 2000, and is expected to attract up to 30 million visitors. The value of the exhibition to Birmingham on London is calculated at £700 million.

The NEC was prepared to invest £50 million in the project. When the London backers realised how close they had come to losing a massive effort, led by Mr Cassidy, was put into lining up support from the business community.

The commission's decision angered Birmingham council. "It has been rigged," said the council leader, Theresa Stewart. "All the balls in this particular lottery were marked Greenwich."

Anne Greenwood, the Tory group leader on the council, said: "It appears to confirm our worst fears that London was going to get it no matter how much better rival bids were."

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities: Table with columns for city, today's weather, and tomorrow's weather. Includes cities like London, Paris, Rome, etc.

European weather outlook: Text describing weather trends across Europe, including mentions of Scandinavia, the Netherlands, and the Low Countries.

Television and radio — Saturday

Television and radio — Saturday: A detailed list of TV and radio programs for the day, including BBC 1, BBC 2, BBC Prime, and various channels like Sky Movies and Sky Sports.

Television and radio — Sunday

Television and radio — Sunday: A detailed list of TV and radio programs for the day, including BBC 1, BBC 2, BBC Prime, and various channels like Sky Movies and Sky Sports.

Additional text on the right side of the page, including a large 'hosa' watermark and other illegible text.



Boxer Max Baer (right, sitting), pictured during Bloom's heyday in 1937, was one of many celebrities to eat at the restaurant

Fings ain't what they used to be as Bloom's shuts East End doors

Maggie O'Keane

THE pickled cucumber and boiled fowl leg dishes that sustained generations of eastern European Jews in lifelong exile in London ended yesterday as Jonathan Tapper, the great grandson of Maurice Bloom, switched off the lights in London's oldest and most famous Jewish restaurant.

Marching through the East End in October 1858, "They shall not pass" was first coined by men who probably came into Bloom's afterwards for hot salt beef. Aumie Shapiro, a historian, who has published six books on the history of the East End, sees Bloom's closure as a sad day, but one that has been a long time coming. "The Jewish population of the East End of London has gone from over a 100,000 in the 1930s to around 6,000 now and the ones that are left are old or do not have the money to dine at Bloom's (about £15 for a three course dinner). "The whole area has gone down over the last 20 years. In the sixties and seventies you'd never get a stall on Petticoat Lane — now it's full of empty lots. "The Jewish drapers of Petticoat Lane and Brick Lane have been replaced by Asian traders and there is not much call for deep fried potato bread and hot fruit cordials. It is the same for the turkey schnitzel, once the traditional



Jonathan Tapper at the door PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK MARTIN

after-dinner bite for the Zionist battling with the communists for space at the Jewish version of Speaker's Corner just outside Bloom's restaurant. Bloom's never claimed to be a pretty diner. The tables were blue formica, the lighting neon and the waiters stumpy, their tempers frayed by a system that forced them to pay for the customer's meal first out of their own pocket and then be reimbursed. The waiters were also paid by the plate — dinner by commission, so the customers were never encouraged to linger long over their orange sorbet. The former diners who came yesterday murmured disappointment but with no grave sense of injustice. Mr Lester, having dined there for 30 years, thought things had got a bit slack. "The salted beef sandwiches weren't what they used to be." Then there was the vexed question of whether all the koshered beef was always kosher. The Beth Din in Lon-

don, the Jewish court, decided in January that the license to sell kosher meat, handed down from father to son Bloom, should be handed back to Bloom senior. The ruling came after worrying reports reached their ears that things at the butchers were not all the rabbi might have wished for. "The orthodox people were very upset about that. They're very particular about that kind of thing," said Mr Lester, who buys and sells on Petticoat Lane. Over the last 10 years, the clients came from the City of fies rather than the synagogues. "It sounds clichéd to say but Bloom's really had a unique atmosphere. I don't mean that it was like something out of an Egon Ronay guide, with tudor beams — it wasn't like that but it was special," said a 42-year-old journalist who had just heard the news that Bloom's had closed. "I used to go there for lockshen soup. God, I feel close to tears."



The name that welcomed Jewish diners PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK MARTIN

Troops back on streets of Belfast

David Sharrock and Sue Quinn

TROOPS were put back on the streets of Belfast for the first time in almost a year yesterday as political efforts to revive the peace process continued in the shadow of the increased security threat. Sixteen soldiers of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, accompanying four police officers, began their patrol at 4.10pm in the vicinity of Oldpark RUC station in the north of the city. Earlier bomb specialists were called to another police station to deal with a suspect device, which was declared safe. Troops also provided cover to police in one other incident. In London, anti-terrorist branch officers yesterday said they had discovered a "substantial quantity" of bomb-making equipment at the south London home of IRA bus bomber Edward O'Brien. Police said the immediate area around George Lane, Lewisham, was evacuated while an undisclosed quantity of material was removed for scientific analysis. Last night, the thoroughfares remained closed to traffic and pedestrians. The Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, is understood to have briefed MPs on Thursday evening of the dangers of IRA attacks during the weekend. Andrew Hunter, chairman of the Tory backbench Northern Ireland committee, said he believed this weekend was "particularly sensitive". He added: "I don't think the troops would be back unless they feared some sort of attack." The Ulster Unionist security spokesman, Ken Maginnis, said he had been predicting there would be IRA activity this weekend. Last week 500 soldiers of the Royal Irish Rangers flew back to Northern Ireland to provide extra cover in border areas. The last daytime patrol by soldiers in Belfast took place

and by March they had disappeared from public view. But some patrols have continued along the border. The RUC described the return of army assistance to some areas as "low-key, local security patrols to protect bases". It added: "Such a measure remains under continuous review and is purely a prudent precautionary move." The Democratic Unionist Party's deputy leader, Peter Robinson, welcomed their return. "The IRA have effectively called the troops back into Northern Ireland. It has in January last year and by March they had disappeared from public view. But some patrols have continued along the border. The RUC described the return of army assistance to some areas as "low-key, local security patrols to protect bases". It added: "Such a measure remains under continuous review and is purely a prudent precautionary move." The Democratic Unionist Party's deputy leader Peter Robinson welcomed their return. "The IRA have effectively called the troops back into Northern Ireland. It has been their choice." But the deputy leader of the nationalist SDLP, Seamus Mallon, was concerned about the impact on community relations, calling the move premature. Meanwhile, a member of the Mitchell Commission on illegal weapons said yesterday that the IRA must call an immediate ceasefire before Sinn Féin could expect to enter all-party talks. Canadian General Sir John de Chastelain told BBC Northern Ireland: "The ceasefire really has to be put back into place first." Amid the growing expectation that a new package of proposals to revive the peace process will be revealed early next week, Downing Street said that John Major spoke by telephone to President Clinton and the Irish prime minister, John Bruton. Irish question may need US answer, page 7

Xhosa chief finds Highland skull

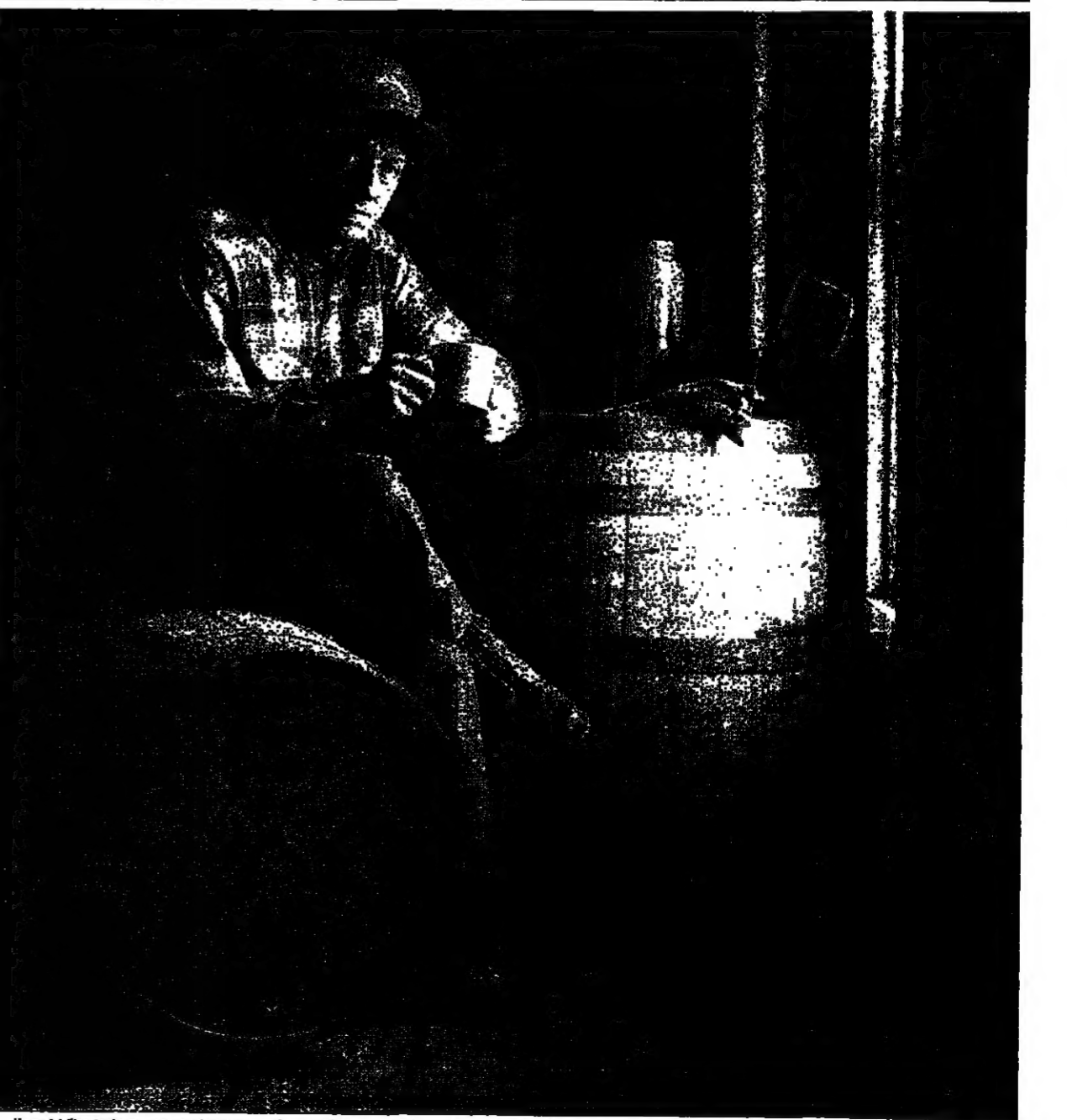
Erlend Clouston

CHIEF Nicholas Galeka's intrepid Scottish safari may have secured its unlikely trophy. Nine days after the traditional headdress flew into Britain on the trail of an extravagant piece of war booty, he found it, or something very like it, glinting on a shelf in the living room of a Highland cottage. The evidence might not have satisfied a Nuremberg prosecutor, but the 49-year-old South African was confidently declaring last night that he had at last located the head of Hintsa, a Xhosa king shot and subsequently mutilated by the British in 1858. The skull, now sitting in a protective box in an Inverness hotel room, belonged

until yesterday to the family of the Sutherland estate owner Charles Brooke. He had an ancestor in the Seaforth Highlanders who may have fought in South Africa. The skull was dug up on the estate 80 years ago. It did have a bullet exit wound — though it was close to the left ear rather than the top of the skull indicated by the official army autopsy on the shooting of Hintsa. "The chief — he does not appreciate being called a witchdoctor — has no reservations. After consulting his spirits, one of whom is called Hurricane, he pronounced the end of his quest and the intention to seek the skull's immediate extradition. "I have never been so happy in all my life," said the former off-licencee, who has had to brave both army dis-

dain and the rigours of the British climate, which forced him to supplement his leopard-skin smock with a pair of brown corduroy trousers. "I woke up today singing and jumping with joy because I knew this was going to be the day the dream brought by the spirit came true." Chief Galeka, whose exotic treasure hunt has been endorsed by the South African president, Nelson Mandela, had suspected that the head was on display in the military museum at Fort George, near Inverness. His spirit-advisers revised their view last weekend, steering the president of the Eastern Cape's medicine men somewhat vaguely towards "a field with a pony". Mr Brooke, whose family has run the 14,000-acre Mid Fearn estate, near Ardgay, for

more than 130 years, was pleased to confirm that the garden where the skull was found overlooked a field that once contained two white ponies. The army, which has admitted cutting off Hintsa's ears but not his head, reacted with cautious magnanimity last night. "If it is the genuine article, we're more than happy for him," said Captain Frank Ward of Scotland HQ. "We hope he goes home and achieves everything he hopes to achieve." Chief Galeka flies out on March 5 with two ambitions: to reunite Hintsa's headless corpse with the Highland skull, and to secure his second bride, a member of the Xhosa royal family. This will make it easier for him to press his claim to Hintsa's crown and 5.5 million subjects.



If you'd like to know more about our unique whiskey, write to us for a free booklet at the Jack Daniel Distillery, Lynchburg, Tennessee USA.

Doctor wins £625,000 libel award

continued from page 1 were given almost no help at all," said Mr Collier-Wright. The company is to appeal against the verdict and the amount of damages. The veteran libel solicitor Peter Carter-Ruck expressed surprise at the size of the award "in view of the guidance that has been given by the Court of Appeal and the right the court now has to indicate [figures]". In yesterday's case the judge, Mr Justice French, did not suggest sums to the jury but told them only to keep their feet on the ground. David Hooper, another leading libel solicitor, estimated the sum was "at least three times too high". The verdict will undoubtedly embarrass Mrs Bottomley, now the Heritage Secretary, who was subpoenaed to defend herself in the witness box last week. Mr Murray died at Leeds general infirmary last March after suffering a severe brain injury. He had been flown 200 miles from Queen Mary's because a neurosurgical intensive care bed could not be found for him in the South-east. Mr Percy, aged 55, from Bickley, Kent, claimed that the articles suggested that he was guilty of gross dereliction of duty and should be suspended for giving advice from home by telephone rather than going to the hospital when Mr Murray was brought in. "The purpose of bringing the case was to clear my name and restore my good reputation as a man and a caring doctor," he said afterwards.

Mr Percy, who brought the case with the financial support from the Medical Protection Society, said that he was never asked to attend the hospital the night Mr Murray was brought in. If he had been, he would have been there like a shot. There was no clinical support that he could have given his particularly competent senior house officer and it would have made absolutely no difference if he had done the ringing round to find a suitable bed for the patient. He said he had been set up to be the scapegoat and political football by Mrs Bottomley and senior NHS officials anxious to divert media attention from health cuts. The Daily Mirror claimed that it had written a fair and



Anthony Percy and his wife, Diane PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF GILBERT

accurate account of a leaked South Thames Regional Health Authority report, which criticised Mr Percy for giving advice to a junior doctor from home by phone rather than going into the hospital. Mr Percy's counsel, Charles Gray QC, alleged that Mrs Bottomley called in a memo for Mr Percy's role to be "flagged up" after being told that he was to be censured. Mrs Bottomley, who spent 2½ hours in the witness box, dismissed the charge that she had made Mr Percy a sacrificial lamb as "complete nonsense". George Carman, for the newspaper, told the jury that Mr Percy had made the "most outrageous, irresponsible and ill-founded criticisms" of the

honesty and integrity of those within the NHS. But Mr Percy said yesterday: "I knew I was being scapegoated by a number of people. I knew it was happening and it was unfair." Mr Percy, who has been a consultant at Queen Mary's since 1977, complained that there was still a problem, about the shortage of neurosurgical and intensive care beds. He called for a central reference point for these beds to be set up in London so that seriously ill patients could be found a place with one phone call. Mirror Group was granted a stay on payment of all but £50,000 of the award pending an appeal. It faces a costs bill estimated at about £300,000.


Top five awards

- Mr Percy's settlement is the 10th largest British libel award.
- Lord Aldington, November 1989, awarded £1.5 million over allegations by Court Michael Tootley that he sent Cosslett's and Vogels' to their deaths in 1945.
- John Walker, his wife Jean, and two boat designing company, Walker Whirlpool Systems, July 1994, won a total of £1.485 million over an article in Yachting World which attacked their revolutionary trimaran. They agreed to receive £160,000.
- Elton John, December 1988, £1 million settlement from the Sun over allegations about his private life.
- Gerome Southam, June 1995, £750,000 damages over a May 1993 article in The People. Settled for £100,000 plus costs.
- Mr Percy's £625,000.

A TENNESSEE BARRELMAN like Richard McGee gets more done before coffee than most folks do in a day.

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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY



Inquest told of deaths of Gloucester builder's first wife and lover Police track down three of missing West women



The sands on the Spurn peninsula have been vulnerable to dramatic but predictable shifts since Roman times

Sally Waale

DETECTIVES announced yesterday that they have traced three out of nine women known to have passed through Rosemary and Fred West's home in Cromwell Street, Gloucester.

They are still looking for a fourth woman, Donna Lynn Moore, but have decided to abandon the search for the remaining five because the descriptions they have are too vague.

Detective Superintendent John Bennett, who headed the West inquiry, said yesterday: "There was and still remains no reason to think that any harm has befallen these women. We only wanted to trace them to help our inquiries."



Catherine 'Rena' West, left, and Anne McFall, West's lover



inally charged with 12 murders, including those of Catherine West and Anne McFall. After he was found hanging in his Birmingham prison cell on New Year's Day last year, all charges were formally dropped.

His wife, Rosemary, was convicted on 10 charges of murder last November. An appeal against conviction is due to be heard next month.

The dismembered remains of both Catherine West and Anne McFall were uncovered in police digs in adjoining cornfields at Kempley, Gloucestershire, in the summer of 1994. The remains of Anne McFall's unborn baby were found alongside her skeleton.

Mr Bennett told the coroner that in police interviews the builder admitted strangling Catherine, but repeatedly denied involvement in Anne's murder. He signed a handwritten note admitting killing Catherine and nine others.

The coroner returned verdicts of unlawful killing for both women, and expressed his sympathy to their relatives.

The three women who have been traced do not want to be fully identified, but police named them as: Marilyn, in her late 30s in 1973 and thought to come from Matson, Gloucester; Mireeker, a Dutch girl in her 20s in 1977; and another Marilyn, aged 18 or 19 in 1973 and believed to be from the Forest of Dean.

The news came as Mr Bennett told an inquest that Fred West's mother, Daisy, believed her son killed his teenage lover years before his eventual arrest. In 1987 she

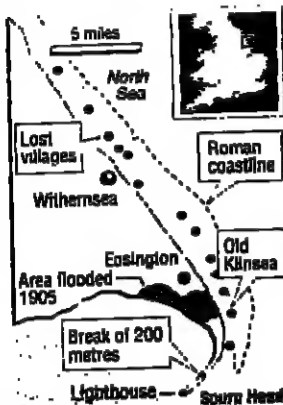
told an unnamed friend: "Fred has killed that young girl and buried her in Kempley Woods."

It was not reported to the police and Mrs West died six months later.

The Gloucester coroner, David Gibbons, was presiding over the resumed inquests into the deaths of Fred West's first wife, Catherine "Rena" West, aged 25, and her friend and babysitter, Anne McFall, aged 18, who was born in Glasgow and was West's lover. West, aged 53, was orig-

Technology thwarts tides through road that will shift with the sands of Spurn

Martin Wainwright on a flexible answer



THE wandering sands of Spurn are set to embark on their latest travels in the North Sea, after multiple breaches by a combination of force nine gales and spring tides.

But modern technology will guarantee access to the lifeboat and pilot stations at the head of the slender Yorkshire peninsula, following a meeting in Hull yesterday of naturalists, lifeboat authorities and local councils.

The fragile finger of land which hooks down into the Humber estuary from the plain of Holderness will be left to its natural devices, but linked to the mainland by a novel system of flexible roadway which will move along with the sand and shingle spit.

"We are delighted that such an imaginative solution which will allow us flexibility for many years

to come has won general agreement so quickly," said Peter Pearson, chairman of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, which runs a reserve on the three-mile point.

The conference in Hull was called after warnings that growing ferry and freighter traffic from the Humber ports needed the pilotage and lifeboat services based at Spurn.

Spurn has moved in dramatic but predictable ways since Roman times, when the coast lay more than two miles westwards beyond the drowned medieval towns of Ravenspurn and Ravenser Odd.

Studies have repeatedly shown that the washing of eroded sand and debris from the Holderness coast always rebuilds the peninsula a little to the west, after breaches by gales and the tide.

Welsh lessons for columnist turned Tory candidate

Martin Linton

BORIS JOHNSON had his first Welsh lesson yesterday as part of his transformation from hell-raising Thatcherite columnist of the Daily Telegraph to prospective Conservative parliamentary candidate for Clwyd South.

Mr Johnson, who landed



Boris Johnson: Fighting 5,000 Labour majority

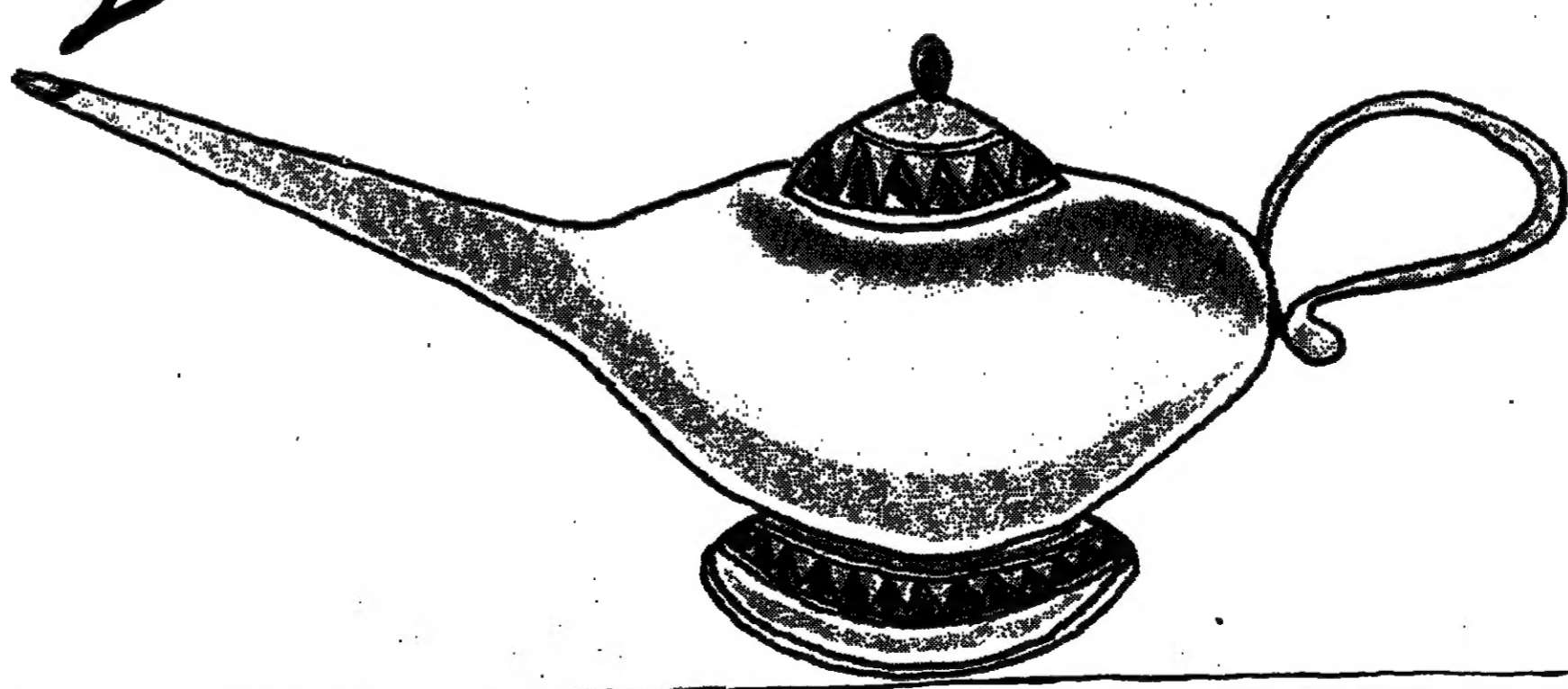
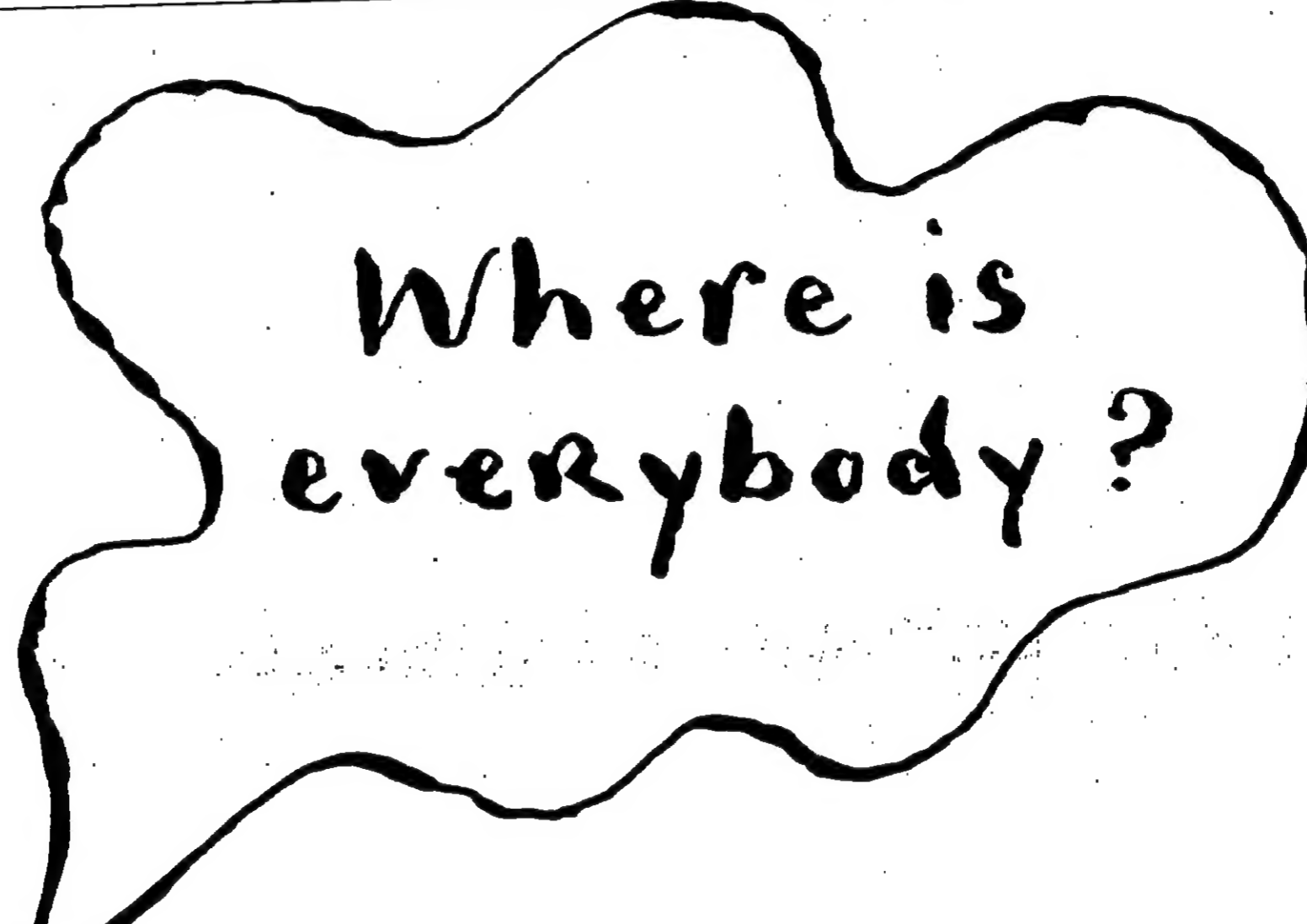
the nomination this week, had only mastered two phrases so far - "jechyd da" and "nos da" - "cheers" and "goodnight" - but insisted that he would soon be chatting fluently to the 40 per cent of voters who speak Welsh in the south of the seat.

Even that is unlikely, do him much good in a seat that is currently held by Labour on a 4,941 majority.

Nor is it likely to go down well in Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant and Gwyddelwern, when they read some of the things he has had to say about Wales in his column.

For example, the time in December 1994 when he sprang to the defence of Rod Richards MP, who said of Welsh Labour councillors: "They're short, they're fat, they're slimy, and they're fundamentally corrupt."

"While [Mr Richards'] views may be exceedingly rude," wrote Mr Johnson, "... he could argue that, dash it, there is a poetic truth contained therein."



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Labour attacks 'expensive bureaucratic paper chase' as minister introduces new rule changes to scheme starting in four pilot areas

Parents confused over nursery vouchers plan

Donald MacLeod
Education Correspondent

A THIRD of parents eligible for nursery vouchers in April have so far failed to apply, the Government admitted yesterday as it began mailing them to families in four pilot areas.

Many parents have thrown away their application forms as their children are already in nursery classes, not realising they still have to apply under the voucher system.

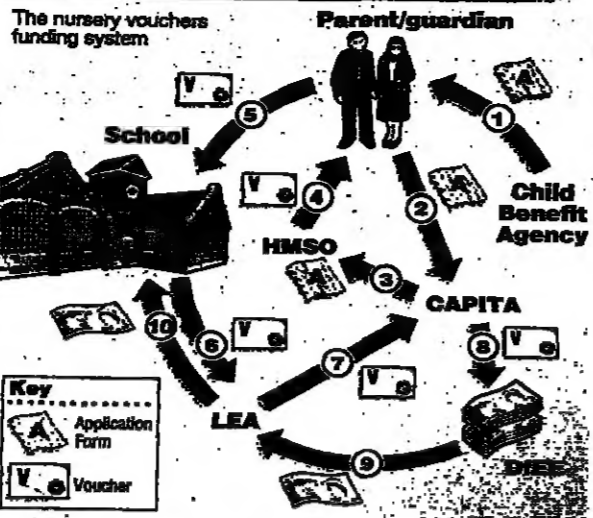
Robin Squire, the schools minister, rejected claims that the system of using the £1,100 vouchers was too bureaucratic. But further confusion was introduced yesterday with another rule change.

In a parliamentary answer Mr Squire said it was up to local authorities to decide whether to handle the voucher paperwork or leave it to schools.

David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, said money would be clawed back from local authorities, then given to a management company to distribute to parents — who would then hand it back to the authorities. Paperwork would cost £250 per child.

"This will be nothing more than an expensive and

The voucher trail



bureaucratic paper chase, without any guarantee of any new places.

Mr Squire said parents still had time to apply. "As soon as they see the voucher they will realise how simple it is to use."

He admitted there would not be places for all four-year-olds, but added: "We believe that within a reasonably short time there will be universal provision."

based company, administering the scheme, which forwarded details to HMSSO at Chedderton, near Manchester, where the vouchers are printed. The first batch of 6,200 went out yesterday.

Vouchers are being issued in four pilot authorities — Norfolk and the London boroughs of Wandsworth, Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea. The initiative is to be extended nationwide next year to fulfil John Major's pledge to provide nursery education for all four-year-olds.

Ministers insist the scheme would not harm provision for younger children, but Westminster council said yesterday it was reviewing funding and places for three-year-olds. The borough estimates it will have a shortfall of 1,500 places for four-year-olds in April, and is struggling to increase provision in collaboration with voluntary play groups and private nurseries.

But Labour claims more than 133,000 places for three-year-olds now provided by local authorities are being put at risk.



Roll call... Schools minister Robin Squire inspecting the first nursery vouchers coming off the presses. PHOTOGRAPH: ROB HOWARTH



Non-drip and pyramid tea bags steep to conquer UK taste buds

Pyramid power... PG Tips' chimp launches new bag

James Melville
Community Affairs Editor

TEA claimed its place among the ultimate designer drinks yesterday, as leading tea bag makers insisted that bags represent the shape of things to come.

Tetley, inventor of the round bag, teased away some of the publicity from PG Tips' new pyramid product by announcing that it would soon introduce Britain to the non-drip bag. And as both companies chortled about no longer being square, the battle for business became a matter of taste.

Tetley's no-mess draw-string bag, on trial in Australia, "means you'll be able to lift the bag from your cup without spilling it all over your desk", said Ian Prutton, director of worldwide business development.

"It has two strings with tags which, when pulled

together, squeeze all excess liquid out of the bag."

Plans for a British launch have to be finalised, but Tetley, which added 25 per cent to sales when it started selling the round bag in 1989, welcomed the competition from the pyramid. "It is good for the market," said Mr Prutton.

But PG Tips, famous for its 40-year-old chimpanzee advertisements suggested that the round bag had done little for taste. "We will not only refresh the tea market but bring a whole new taste," said Marcus Marsden, PG Tips' senior brand manager.

The pyramid bag will be launched in April. "Tests proved that the tetrahedral tea bag comes closer to allowing the tea to brew like loose tea in a teapot than any other bag," says the advertising blurb.

"Whether the pyramid makes a better cup remains to be seen," said Mr Prutton.

Britain's greatest defence is now under severe attack



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The supertanker Sea Empress has already spilled 70,000 tons of crude oil into the sea off South West Wales.

The innocent victims? The Wildlife. Birds and seals, paralysed by oil. Fish deprived of any food. And let's not forget our once beautiful beaches.

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Chirac mutilates the armourers of Bourges

A presidential insistence that the British way is best comes hard to the men who make parts for France's tanks and missiles, writes **Alex Duval Smith**

REGIS RUELLÉ sent food parcels to striking British miners and telegrams to Bobby Sands. So he does not take very kindly to President Jacques Chirac's latest bout of Anglophilia.

"Chirac keeps telling us that we must model our defence on Britain's," he said. "That basically means going down the Thatcherite route of privatisation and massive job losses. Soon he'll be telling us to drive on the left."

The only change of direction Mr Ruellé can foresee for himself and the other 1,400 staff at Giat Industries in Bourges is a quick march to the job centre. At the age of over 40, and after 30 years of service, he does not relish the prospect.

Giat's employees in Bourges, one of the compa-

Mr Ruellé, who started as a machine-tool worker and is now the full-time representative at Giat for the communist-inclined CGT union, said: "He's doing this for Europe, forgetting France's territorial interests and ignoring a republican tradition in which arms are not just another commodity subject to market forces."

He is not being utopian, at least not by the standards of Bourges. Here, most of the streets are named after Napoleon III's generals: the emperor made Bourges a defence capital after France lost Alsace-Lorraine to the Prussians in 1871 and it was expedient to re-locate the armaments industry.

The present population includes 5,000 troops. Four thousand civilians work for Giat or make missiles at Aérospatiale. Others staff the biotech ETBS factory, which tests army equipment.

On Wednesday the shops in the two main streets closed their shutters or turned off their lights for two hours as a mark of solidarity. Their *mise* (dead city) gesture was intended to illustrate the future face of a region that employs 12,000 in the defence industry.

Yesterday no shopkeeper was willing to believe the government's promise that no jobs would be lost. Most agreed with the Socialist Party's estimate of up to 60,000 losses nationally.

"In a few years' time Bourges will be as much of a desert as northern France became when they closed down the steel companies in the 1980s," said Merric Le Minoux, owner of the Victor Hugo brasserie.

At the Giat canteen on the southern outskirts the workers were resigned. "There is more [dead city] gesture being done to save up the pennies while the going is good," said Christophe Bouffano, aged 26, a research worker.

Gerard Boyer, aged 47, a shop-floor worker, said: "There is very little private industry here, and most of that is doing subcontracted work for the defence companies. There is the Michelin



Bad news... The peace of Bourges' old quarter is shattered by Chirac's defence cuts bombshell. PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERTS

tyre factory, but they have halved their staff in the last three years.

No one in Bourges, which holds one of Europe's largest rock festivals every spring and whose mediaeval centre draws tourists, has managed to produce an idea for creating new long-term employment.

"Perhaps we could make

tourist coaches or chairs for ski-lifts," a production worker said despondently.

He and others are profoundly disappointed with the city's deputy and mayor, Serge Lepeltier of Mr Chirac's Rally for the Republic party voted for the government's reduced defence budget in November.

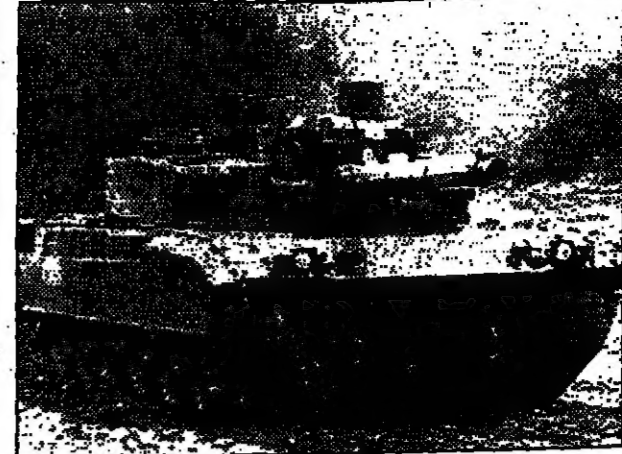
But the resignation reflects an understanding that Mr

Chirac does not have much choice: French defence has not been adapted to the post-cold war era and the export market has slumped.

Mr Ruellé said: "The only market left is the Middle East. We have sold 436 Leclerc tanks to the United Arab Emirates, which means they will have more of them than France. But we are part of a

new European defence structure which Chirac does not want to fight.

"Under it, Germany will make tanks, Britain will provide its nuclear deterrent and surveillance. There will be no room for our tank barrels, or for the century of know-how Bourges has accumulated."



The Leclerc battle tank that faces its last battle

PM rejects EU defence role

David Fabhall
Defence Correspondent

PUTTING Brussels in charge of European defence would sacrifice real security needs to "institutional tidiness and the illusion of progress", John Major declared yesterday.

In a speech evidently calculated to reassure Conservative Euro-sceptics without unduly alarming Britain's allies the Prime Minister spelt out the strict limits to which his Government was prepared to see the European Union take control of defence policy and operations. The EU could make an essential contribution to regional security "in the non-military field", he told Western European Union MPs in London. But giving it military responsibilities would do nothing to enhance this.

Mr Major was addressing a special assembly called to discuss the EU's inter-governmental conference which starts next month, where the determination of some governments to give Brussels direct responsibility for defence will be among the most contentious issues. Some had argued that the conference should take the first steps towards an eventual merger of the EU and the WEU, but this was "a recipe not for more action, but less".

possibilities for which it was not equipped would impede the extension of security eastwards, create a new obstacle to the accession of central European states and marginalise Nato allies which were not involved.

By contrast, Britain intended to use his WEU presidency to make it an effective instrument for planning and controlling military operations for which Nato was not appropriate — because they did not involve the United States, he said.

Ministers had agreed four years ago to prepare the WEU for peacekeeping, humanitarian relief operations and crisis management. "Our objective is that by the end of the year, the WEU should be ready to perform a good number of these", the Prime Minister added.

The tension over the issue of European military integration reached a peak after last year's rabble-rousing Tory party conference speech by the Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo, when he told delegates that brave British soldiers would never give their lives "for Brussels". Since then Anglo-American suspicions that the development of European military institutions like the Eurocorps would weaken Nato have been allayed by further French moves to reintegrate with the transatlantic alliance.

Their 'dead city' gesture was intended to illustrate the region's future

ny's 14 manufacturing bases in France, make barrels for the army's Leclerc battle tanks. In these rapid-deployment times, tanks are out of fashion, at least the 52-ton variety, which hardly any cargo aeroplane can carry.

President Chirac made that quite clear on Thursday night when he went live on French television to outline what will undoubtedly be the toughest policy initiative in his seven-year term. His complete overhaul of French defence affects 300,000 civilians and 900,000 military personnel.

In Bourges, where one in two jobs depends on defence, it was thoroughly bad news. President Chirac intends to abolish conscription in six years' time and create a career army, equipped to deploy rapidly. "The Great Britain" he will virtually halve the number of ground troops, the ones that use tanks.

Divorce adds to Saddam drama

David Hirst in Beirut

PRESIDENT Saddam Hussein's two eldest daughters have divorced their defector husbands who returned to Iraq this week. Baghdad television announced yesterday in the latest turn in the bizarre and bewildering Saddam family drama.

It is the first time that the official Iraqi media have even so much as mentioned that Rughad and Rana had left for Jordan last August with their fugitive husbands — Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel al-Majid and his cousin Saddam Kamel al-Majid. President Saddam wanted no reminder of defections that were a special dishonour and humiliation.

had now broken with them because of their "betrayal of their country and the noble value of their family".

Their public repudiation reinforces the question everyone has been asking: what induced Lieut-Gen Majid to go back, and how did he get others of his entourage to go along?

Official statements about their likely fate have not been reassuring. The Revolutionary Command Council approved "their application for a pardon": a spokesman said they would be treated as "ordinary citizens". But any ordinary citizen who did what they did faces certain execution.

Lieut-Gen Majid — formerly head of Iraq's weapons programmes — is said originally to have fled because he feared for his life at the hands

of Mr Saddam's tempestuous elder son, Uday. Ominously, it was Uday who headed the "reception" committee for the returning penitents, and it was his personal propaganda outlet — Youth Television — which broke the news that his sisters had "requested and obtained their divorce".

The favourite explanation for Lieut-Gen Majid's decision to go home is that he had reached a state of despair, if not complete breakdown, because of his failure to win any support outside Iraq for his bid to "replace" Saddam. According to the London newspaper al-Hayat, he spent his last days in his palace in Amman "cursing everyone around him, shouting down the telephone and making contradictory statements to the press reflecting a loss of mental balance".

News in brief

US official held as 'Soviet spy'

A FORMER member of the highly secret United States National Security Agency was arrested yesterday on charges of spying for the Soviet Union in the mid-1960s, Justice Department officials said.

"This is not an Ames case by any means," an FBI official said, dismissing comparisons with the spy scandal involving the former CIA official Aldrich Ames.

The officials said Robert Lipka, aged 50, who worked at the NSA in 1964-67 on secret intelligence communications, was arrested in Pennsylvania. — Reuter.

Women's right to protection

Women who have been raped, suffered sexual violence or fear female circumcision are entitled to refugee status if they leave their country, the UN declared yesterday.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees urged more countries to follow Canada and the United States in drafting guidelines recognising a woman's right to protection against "gender-based persecution". — Reuter.

Di Pietro wooed

Politicians of different persuasions from the former fascist to the ex-Communists yesterday set about trying to lure the popular former pro-

secutor, Antonio Di Pietro, into their ranks for Italy's April 21 general election. John Hooper in Rome writes. Their efforts came a day after a judge threw out charges of extortion and abuse of office against Mr Di Pietro.

Lethal injection

The "Freeway Killer" became California's first inmate executed by injection yesterday. William Bonin, aged 49, was put to death for murdering 14 boys and young men and dumping their bodies on highways. — AP.

Bahrain unrest

Suspected Shi'ite anti-government protesters in Bahrain set a bank on fire, blocked a main highway and exploded gas cylinders on Thursday

light but residents said yesterday the violence had scaled down. — Reuter.

Fire investigation

The mayor of Venice and the superintendent of the La Fenice opera house are being investigated for the fire that gutted the city's landmark last month. The case could centre on whether enough fire prevention measures were taken. — AP.

China clampdown

China has blamed Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, for unrest in the Himalayan region in recent years and vowed to close politically problematic lamaseries and jail separatist monks and nuns, the official Tibet Daily reported yesterday. — Reuter.

It will not be enough to tell the children that everyone on the ship worked hard to save it, nor that the salvage team were working against difficult weather. They will see the dead and dying birds; they will miss the crab in the rockpools next summer

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In the wake of the end of the IRA ceasefire, Guardian writers look abroad for hope of a settlement in Northern Ireland

Irish question may need US answer

With the peace process stalled, Washington could hold the key to progress as Clinton seeks to safeguard one of his proudest foreign policy achievements.

Below Jonathan Freedland examines the influence of Irish America on White House policy

NOW all they can do is wait, along with everyone else. For the next few days, perhaps weeks, Irish America is sitting tight as President Clinton weighs his next move in the peace process he has all but called his own. The question has boiled down to this: will he or won't he?

At its narrowest, will Mr Clinton renew the US entry visa of the Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams? Will he do it by March 17, so that Mr Adams can walk in one of the many St Patrick's Day parades? Will Mr Clinton grant the visa, but as a punishment for the London bombings and the end of the IRA ceasefire, reimpose the ban on Sinn Féin fundraising in the US? The timing is critical because the lead up to what Americans call St Faddy's Day is boom time for Irish fund-raising. A million dollars has reportedly been shipped from the US to Sinn Féin already. But March 17 has an extra significance. In New York and across America it is more than an Irish day out — it's a national rite of spring. Gerry Adams knows that goodwill for his cause is never greater than on that day.

There is, though, a larger question: will Bill Clinton stay the course, or walk away from Northern Ireland?

The answer matters because, in a world where international conflicts appear to need external pressure before they can be resolved, Mr Clinton has been the outsider who has brought movement to Northern Ireland. His enemies and his friends agree, he has been more engaged in the province than any other American president.

Yesterday he telephoned Mr Major and the Irish prime minister, John Bruton, from

Air Force One, speaking to each for five to ten minutes. Those who know Mr Clinton say he will stay involved since he now has a direct stake in peace in northern Ireland. The political reasons have been released often: there are 44 million US voters claiming Irish lineage of whom perhaps two million feel their identity keenly; the 17-month ceasefire was one of the brightest points in a patchy foreign policy record; last year's visit to Belfast and Dublin was, by consensus, the highlight of the Clinton presidency (the footage was just waiting to be converted into TV ads for November's election campaign). For those reasons alone, Mr Clinton cannot afford to have the peace process go into reverse.

What's more, the president is under no political pressure to abandon Northern Ireland. There is no pro-British vote in the US, and few Republicans have seen any political profit in an end to a ceasefire which everyone wanted to work. Remarkably even now there is no domestic pressure on Mr Clinton to desert his new political ally Gerry Adams.

But the crucial point is that there is a very powerful political and economic force working to ensure Mr Clinton stays involved: Irish America. Indeed, some say the real outside agent in the battle for Northern Ireland has been a team effort by the US government and the country's Irish community.

It was Irish-American pressure which pushed Mr Clinton to weigh in in the first place, subsequently lobbying him on the Adams visa and Sinn Féin fundraising. As with all things Clinton, there was a political history to this, too. Irish-Americans had worked for Bill Clinton when he was an unknown presidential wannabe, back in 1991.



It's good to talk... On his visit to Belfast last year President Clinton shakes the hand of Gerry Adams, an action which John Major said would turn his stomach. Elsewhere in the world, the conflict in South Africa (top), the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (middle) and the Zapatista uprising in Mexico have all shown themselves amenable to negotiation

"He feels the Irish were there for him early," says Niall O'Dowd, publisher of the Irish Voice, and a key liaison between the administration and the community.

What is remarkable is not that a US president is repaying a political debt to Irish-Americans, but that he is using activity in Northern Ireland to do it. For most of this century, no one would have made the connection. Unlike American Jews, who have always demanded a pro-Israel stance from their

government, Irish-American concern for Ireland has waxed and waned. Of course the first wave of immigrants were obsessed by the old country; a band of Fenians attempted to invade British-held Canada in 1866 and 1870 in the hope that London would hand over Ireland in a swap for Canada; "dynamite schools" popped up in Brooklyn and Chicago, training fighters for the Irish war; the agitators of the Land League were funded by Irish-American dollars.

But later generations lost interest, as they set about making their way in America. The legendary Irish political machines in Boston and New York were preoccupied with gaining local influence and jobs — not on foreign policy. Faced with anti-Irish and anti-Catholic bigotry, they worked hard to become unhyphenated Americans. That drive for assimilation reached its climax in the election of a third-generation Irishman as president in 1960. John F. Kennedy meant "it

was OK to be Irish," says Mr O'Dowd — and Irish-Americans began to take pride in their roots. Peter Quinn, a leading chronicler of Irish-America, believes it was assimilation itself which triggered the reawakening. "When your identity begins to unravel, that's when you become interested in it," he says. In the early 1980s, the trend crystallised. Like all America's ethnic groups, the Irish began to look for their roots. The connection with North-

ern Ireland came with the H-block hunger strike of 1981. "Ten guys starving to death had an impact that a thousand bombs in London would never have," recalls Mr O'Dowd. The IRA had always turned off all but a tiny minority of Irish-Americans. Now more started to care. These moderate forces began working with the Irish government, who had previously dismissed Irish-America as too extreme. The initial focus of their efforts was the wave of illegal

immigrants flooding into the US in the mid-1980s. That was resolved in the famous lottery for Green Cards, but it left a working relationship between Irish America and Dublin that has endured. Now second only to Jews as America's best educated and most affluent ethnic group — a community of company bosses and professionals, not cops and navvies — Irish America's interest in the old country has been stirred. And they're making sure their president doesn't forget it.

Lessons of world's conflicts that Britain might do well to learn

Derek Brown in Jerusalem, David Beerstead in Johannesburg, Ian Traynor in Bonn and Chris Taylor in London

From Sarajevo to San Salvador, Jerusalem to Johannesburg and beyond, the guns have fallen relatively silent. The batters have stolen a lead over the men of violence. Armed struggle, terrorism, and authoritarianism are yielding to halting reconciliation and fragile freedoms. Yet in London and Belfast, the bombers are back. The police of No Surrender are proving impervious to the different forms of peace process taking root in such varied theatres of conflict as South Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans and Central America.

Are John Major and Gerry Adams dancing to a different tune from Mandela and De Klerk, Peres and Arafat, Milosevic and Izetbegovic, the Sandinistas and the Contras? Are we contented to shuffle one step forward and two steps back, while the partners to other seemingly intractable conflicts manage to reverse that terrible pattern?

All of these conflicts differ hugely from one another. But in the 1990s they have also exhibited common factors, the Troubles significantly less so than the others — the bowing to international pressure, the vulnerability to economic leverage, the calculation of the rival warring sides that there is more to be gained from the peace — even where that means not so much reconciliation as pursuing the conflict by other means — and the courage of the rival leaders required to sue for peace.

The Middle East conflict, for example, may be younger than the Irish Question, but it is, like Bosnia, certainly bigger and bloodier. Yet in the last three years, the region has moved towards a kind of reconciliation, while Northern Ireland has seenawed between hope and despair. In those years, Israel has passed from having one unenthusiastic ally in the region, Egypt, into a new era of partnership with the Palestine Liberation Organisation and a full peace with Jordan. Now, as the PLO consolidates

and extends its hold in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the contrast with the woeful events in Britain and Ireland could not be greater.

Any attempt to draw lessons from one peace process and apply them directly to another would be grossly inappropriate. The conflicts are simply too different in context and in scale. But there are recurring parallels. Britain, like Israel, had to consider the price of peace, and act accordingly. Israel has paid the price, and many Israelis consider it outrageously high. Britain cavilled over the terms and is now suffering.

The late Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin had a hawkish background but pointed out that "Negotiations are conducted with enemies not friends".

Yitzhak Rabin

and to declare emphatically: "I am not a mediator." Outside arbitration has been central in the Middle East and Bosnia, less so in Northern Ireland because of British hawks rising at the White House's engagement. All the way back to the multilateral Middle East conference in October 1991 in Madrid, the US and the then Soviet Union were the key external agents, but the European Union also played its part, and the vital breakthrough between Israel and the PLO came in Norway. In the case of Bosnia, the EU, the United Nations, the Russians and the Americans all laboured towards a deal before the Americans seized the international leadership last year leading to November's breakthrough in Oslo. In the Central American war zones, where the US was an active agent in or sponsor of much of the violence, it was the UN or other Latin American governments who played the honest broker.

trast, Downing Street insisted on IRA arms surrender before negotiations could take place. The Israelis and the Bosnian parties accepted international mediation, indeed outside military intervention eventually in Bosnia's case, and agreed on mass prisoner releases.

While the US mediator Richard Holbrooke shuttled around the Balkans in pursuit of a deal and his boss Warren Christopher speaks regularly to and from the Middle East to keep the peace momentum going, George Mitchell, the retired US senator, who led the three-man body which advised on decommissioning paramilitary weapons last month, arrived in London on Wednesday to survey the Ulster impasse.



The outside pressure takes not only the form of good offices mediation, but also is brought to bear on bank balances. The deployment of money or lack of it to concentrate minds on peace has been another key to success in the South African revolution, in the Middle East and in Bosnia. In the case of South Africa, economists and political scientists believe disinvestment, through formal sanctions and the flight of foreign funds resulting from a pragmatic assessment of risk by hard-businessmen, forced the apartheid state into concessions. In the Balkans, the stick of the UN trade embargo on Serbia helped persuade President Slobodan Milosevic to brush aside Bosnian Serb recalcitrance and sign the accord for them, while the carrot of reconstruction funds encouraged the Bosnians and the Croats to make peace.

The absence of imposed economic penalties in the case of Northern Ireland means that this instrument has had little impact. And setting Northern Ireland apart from the other disputes is perhaps the question of legitimacy and recognition. There has seldom been any doubt that Nelson Mandela's and the ANC's claims to leadership would be vindicated at the ballot box, similarly with Yasser Arafat and the PLO, while the three nationalist parties of Serbs, Croats and Muslims in Bosnia are the only contesting game in town, and in control of their constituencies. Gerry Adams and his Sinn Féin suffer by comparison. It is the huge gap between the popular support enjoyed by Mr Mandela or Mr Arafat or Mr Izetbegovic and Gerry Adams which makes all the difference to the quest for peace in Northern Ireland.

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Racing

Ron Cox believes David Nicholson's enigmatic chaser is on course for another big pay-day

Post time for Barton Bank

BARTON BANK, jump racing's Jekyll and Hyde character, can reveal the better side of his nature at Kempton today when he returns to the scene of his greatest triumph to contest the Racing Post Chase.

When he's good, he's very good - as he proved when beating Bradbury Star in the 1993 King George VI Chase at Kempton - but Barton Bank has always been prone to the sort of lapse which denied him another King George win in 1994.

Well clear going to the final fence, he misread Adrian McGuire's signal for a big jump and ploughed through the obstacle, giving the jockey no chance of staying on board.

Since then, Barton Bank has had more ups and downs but it is surely significant that McGuire keeps faith with him today rather than partner David Nicholson's other runner, the lightly-weighted Percy Smollett.

This is Barton Bank's first run in a handicap chase and he faces a very real chance. Rated the equivalent of 180 when he was poised to win his second King George, he has slipped to a mark of 168.

Barton Bank's "bad" side re-surfaced in the latest renewal of the King George, but Nicholson had expressed doubts that the switch to Sandown would not be in the 10-year-old's favour. Pulled up before two out, he can leave that form well behind on the return to Kempton.

At Wetherby in October, Barton Bank showed he retains plenty of ability when making short work of Young Hustler, who was, admittedly, conceding 5lb. He is reported in great shape at home and has always thrived on a light preparation.

The more rain the better for Percy Smollett, who struggled to finish just ahead of Young Hustler on faster ground at Sandown in the race won by Anton Browne.



Buttercup Joe (left), takes the final flight with Djais, on his way to victory at Kempton yesterday.

lier Ascot meeting, looks closely handicapped with Percy Smollett. He was going well when he fell four out in a valuable race at Leopardstown next time, and if he puts his best foot forward for Richard Dunwoody should be well in contention.

Big Matt will be another major player if he stays the three miles, but this looks a big chance for Barton Bank (4.10), who at his best is better than a handicapper.

Jodani has been declared for the Racing Post, but is an intended runner at Haydock, where he is also saddled with top weight in the Greenalls Grand National Trial. Expected to meet the run, Jodani faces a stiff task.

ing Grand National handicaps and Lo Stregone, hinkered for the first time since finishing third to Wildford in last year's Scottish National, has the services of Charlie Swan.

Back at Kempton, Alderbrook (1.25) should take care of his six rivals in the Levy Board Hurdle. Connections of the long-absent champion have been making all the right noises.

Kempton card with form for the televised races

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Races include 1.25 Alderbrook, 1.55 High Burn, 3.00 Dracophila, 3.35 Seabell, 4.10 Barton Bank, 4.40 Seaside Cash, 5.10 Chilled.

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Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Races include 3.00 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 3.30 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 3.55 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 4.25 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 4.55 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 5.25 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 5.55 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE.

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Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Races include 4.10 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 4.40 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 4.55 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 5.25 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE, 5.55 BUCKINGHAM HURDLE.

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Haydock with form for the TV races

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Rugby League

Gregory puts paid to doubt

Paul Fitzpatrick on the cocky coach who plans to give Saints the Wigan treatment

ANDY GREGORY'S capacity for springing surprises was a strength that made him one of the finest post-war scrum-halfs. Unorthodox, unpredictable, unorthodox and with a cockiness born of an innate self-confidence, he could drive opponents to distraction and single-handedly destroy them.

He came into the game, he says, not to make friends but to win things. And he has done so. He went to Wembley nine times, including a Grand National for Great Britain against Australia in 1990, and was never on the losing side. It will always rankle with him that he was never part of a Great Britain side that won a series against Australia, but one performance alone, at Sydney in 1988, will ensure him an imperishable place in Ashes history.

Now he has guaranteed his Salford team a place in Challenge Cup history, after plotting the downfall of Wigan at The Willows two weeks ago - his old club's first defeat in the competition in 44 games.

St Helens, the new favourites for the cup, will tread the same dangerous path this afternoon and will pray it does not lead to the grave. It could do so if Salford play as impressively as they did against Wigan, but that would be asking a lot of Gregory's men.

One effect of Salford's victory over Wigan was to inject much-needed vitality into a tournament which increasingly since 1988 had been crying out for a new script. Another was to demand a new and respectful assessment of Andy Gregory the coach.

John Wilkinson, Salford's chairman, was told by more than one sceptic last March that he had opted for the wrong man when Gregory, who had arrived

at Salford via Leeds in 1993, was given charge of the side full-time in succession to the Australian coach Garry Jack. Gregory can see why people had their doubts. He admits that on the field he was a hot-head at times and had brushes with referees. He walked out on Widnes, his first club, and left Warrington, his second, in sour circumstances.

Did he have the necessary self-control to be a successful coach? Did he have the tact? Above all, perhaps, did he have the patience? He is not, he admits, the best of spectators and possibly Manchester United than to watch Salford.

That Gregory, at 34, is a young coach to watch was proved beyond question over a Centenary season which emphasised how unlucky Salford were not to be in the first Super League which starts next month.

The First Division was more competitive than the Centenary Championship but Salford won it emphatically from such rivals as Keighley and Featherstone, and from Widnes, Hull and Wakefield, three clubs still in the last eight of the Challenge Cup.

In winning the title Gregory showed that the many hours he had spent in the company of Doug Laughton, Graham Lowe and John Monie - three of the most influential coaches in his career - had been time well spent. He has built a fit and successful side, fostered an excellent team spirit while pursuing a strong disciplinary line, and in his man-management has shown flexibility without leaving anyone in doubt who is in charge.

It was a source of great satisfaction to Gregory this week that Salford signed two youngsters, Robert Russell and Ricky Halliwell, who were being pursued by bigger clubs, Bradford and Leeds among them. "That shows people want to come to this club."

His ambition for Salford is unambiguous. "I want to get them into Super League and I want to keep them there. I want a successful Academy side and a suc-



Basket of tricks... Gregory sits it out behind Salford's ground PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

cessful Alliance side so that players are pushing for places right the way through the club.

But he has another objective, too, and that is to ensure that Salford's season does not end this afternoon.

"We did our homework on Wigan and we have done our homework on Saints," he says.

Court casts doubt on Super League

Paul Fitzpatrick

THE European Super League, due to kick off in Paris at the end of next month, will go ahead as planned in spite of Super League's emphatic defeat in its court battle with the Australian Rugby League.

Much less certain to take place are the world club championship play-offs planned for September and Great Britain's tour of Australia in an attempt to win the first Super League season. They were also a persuasive reason for the game's switch to summer.

They could have produced big money for the four successful European clubs: as much as £3 million for two weeks' work. This puts into perspective the £1.7 million sponsorship deal over three years that the Rugby Football League signed recently with Stones Bitter. The tour, too, would have been a guaranteed earner.

But these events - and many other issues - are shrouded in doubt after Justice James Burdett's ruling in Sydney yesterday. After a 51-day hearing which started last September he found in favour of the ARL on all major points of contention and ordered the eight breakaway Super League clubs to return to the ARL.

Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, backer of the Super League, is to appeal and will consider its options over the weekend. But it seems next to impossible that its competition in Australia for 10 clubs will start next Friday as planned.

Mark O'Brien, lawyer for the ARL, said: "There is no way Super League will get under way. Murdoch has tried to hijack the game and failed." The ARL will on Monday seek an order to stop the Super League going ahead and to prevent players who broke their contracts from playing in any competition other than the ARL.

But Maurice Lindsay, the English game's chief executive, insisted: "The judgment will not affect the European Super League. Our contract with Sky's is unaffected." Lindsay said he had been assured by Ken Cowley, chairman and chief executive of News Corporation, that its commitment to the rest of the world was "unshakable".

With considerable understatement Cowley admitted that the judge's ruling was "a setback" but he said News Corporation's "commitment to our players, clubs and followers is unchanged". This whole messy, bitter, complex and damaging feud began last year when Murdoch, in an attempt to win the Australian rugby league television rights from Kerry Packer, announced his plans for a breakaway Super League.

Court proceedings were initiated by News Corporation, which claimed that agreements signed between the ARL and the New South Wales RL and its 20 clubs in November 1994 and February 1995 were "invalid". The ARL counter-sued, giving 28 reasons why Super League should not start a rival competition before December 31 1995, when Justice Burdett agreed with all its major submissions.

Bentley to face Leeds as appeal finds him clumsy, not malicious

JOHN BENTLEY is free to play in Halifax's Challenge Cup quarter-final with Leeds at Thrum Hall tomorrow after his appeal against a one-match suspension proved successful yesterday, writes Paul Fitzpatrick.

The appeals committee felt that Bentley's high tackle on the Sheffield Eagles player Lynton Stott last Sunday was clumsy rather than malicious and his previous good record was taken into account. Bentley's Halifax colleague Mike Umaga had his three-match suspension confirmed and he and the forward Michael Jackson, who was also suspended for three matches but did not appeal, will be absent against Leeds.

December, returns to the Leeds side. It is Leeds' only change from the team that beat Warrington in the last round, when Craig James was the centurion. Zealandar has now joined the Australian club Manly.

Halifax and Leeds will both have been inspired by Wigan's early exit at Salford a fortnight ago. Leeds probably have most cause to celebrate, having been beaten at Wembley by Wigan for the past two seasons. Leeds's half-back Graham Holroyd said: "Let's hope it is a case of third time lucky. With Wigan knocked out it has lifted every club still left in."

Doncaster runners and riders

Table of horse racing results for Doncaster, including race numbers, names of horses, and winners.

Musselburgh programme

Table of horse racing results for Musselburgh, including race numbers, names of horses, and winners.

Lingfield all-weather flat card

Table of horse racing results for Lingfield all-weather flat races, including race numbers, names of horses, and winners.

Results

Table of horse racing results for various tracks, including race numbers, names of horses, and winners.

Newcastle doubt

NEWCASTLE'S meeting on Monday is in doubt as parts of the course are waterlogged. James Hutchinson, clerk of the course, said yesterday: "The track was not raceable today and we need a drying wind. We will inspect on Sunday morning."

RACELINE logo and contact information for racing results and news.

HAYDOCK

Table of horse racing results for Haydock, including race numbers, names of horses, and winners.

SOUTHWELL

Table of horse racing results for Southwell, including race numbers, names of horses, and winners.

KEMPTON

Table of horse racing results for Kempton, including race numbers, names of horses, and winners.

Large table of horse racing results for various tracks, including race numbers, names of horses, and winners.

Soccer

Now Batty moves to Newcastle

Jan Ross

DAVID BATTY'S acrimonious relationship with Blackburn Rovers ended in predictable divorce yesterday when he agreed to join Newcastle United.

Barring a dispute over the terms of his contract, the former England international midfielder will move from Premiership champions to Premiership leaders in a £3.75 million deal on Monday.

"David will receive a medical examination and then discuss personal terms with us over the weekend," said Newcastle's chief executive, Freddie Fletcher.

Batty's arrival on Tyneside will take Newcastle's spending to almost £25 million in under a year and will come less than a month after a club-record £8.7 million was invested in the Colombian international striker Faustino Asprilla.

Batty's departure from Ewood Park was regarded as little more than a formality after an unpleasant public falling-out with his manager, Ray Harford, last month. Blackburn's manager, Kevin Keegan had to raise his initial £3.5 million bid to get his man.

"He's the type of player we have not got here," said Keegan. "I have been interested in him for a long time—ever before he was injured last season. Now he is back to his best and I'm delighted he's joining us. He is another string to our bow."

Although some Newcastle fans seem less than thrilled by the deal, Keegan brushed aside the doubts. "You want to see some of the letters I had when I signed Asprilla," he

said. "But he answered them in the right way, and so will Batty."

The midfielder is something of a talisman. After playing an integral part in Leeds United's championship success of 1992, he was controversially sold to Blackburn only 17 months later.

Despite sustaining a serious injury he made a belated contribution to Blackburn's Premiership success last season, playing sufficient games to pick up a second winners' medal.

Meanwhile, Aston Villa's manager Brian Little returned to his former club Leicester City with chequebook in hand yesterday to sign the England Under-21 forward Julian Joachim for £1.5 million.

If Joachim passes his medical he is likely to line up against Wimbledon at Selhurst Park this afternoon. He will give us extra competition for places and if he does get into the first team it is up to him to try and stay there," said Little. "He is the right age and calibre and I believe he will do well for us."

Sheffield United yesterday secured the £200,000 signing of the Scottish international Andy Walker from Celtic.

● *Cynthia Bateman adds:* Defections continued from the Football Association of Ireland yesterday, with Finbar Flood, a distinguished member of the 20-man executive council, following Sean Connolly, chief executive, Joe McGrath, national coaching director, and Michael Morris, the accountant, out of the door.

The latest resignation fuelled speculation that the five-man executive will soon face a vote of no confidence.



Touch and go... Scott Green puts in some hard yards as his team-mates take the opportunity to catch their breath. PHOTOGRAPH MICHAEL STEELE

Bolton's hat in the ring

WHEN Uncle Billy Bateman, a keen Manchester City supporter, was a lad and Bolton Wanderers, his older brother Harry used to send him down the cobbled tram-lined Manchester street where they lived to cadge old caps and hats from neighbours. Thus armed, they would station themselves among the 60,000 on Burnden Park's terraces and hurl the hats into the air whenever Bolton scored.

Metaphorically, Bolton supporters will be doing the same thing tomorrow as Wanderers try to put one over Manchester United. By the time they meet at Leeds on February 11 in which Leeds at the top may be back to nine points, if Kevin Keegan's team defeat Manchester City at Maine Road today.

"City generally do us one good turn a season," said Alan Rushton, a Bolton fan who gains an advantage there. Bolton will be desperate to beat it back to Newcastle on Sunday.

"We only hate United" is one of the favourite chants of Wanderers supporters, who were recently granted Keegan as the best fans he had come across—outside Tyne-side, of course. Only a cynic would dare suggest he had today's match in mind, for there is nothing Bolton fans would like better than to pock the old enemy's party.

"The atmosphere will be electric," said a supporters' spokesman, Neil Leonard. "But I'm not looking forward to it. It's a hardship. I work in north Manchester and the amount of ridicule I get because we are bottom of the Premiership is cruel. We have become a bit of a joke, which is rather sad."

"A lot of nice people are Manchester United fans but I come up against some representatives of the Manchester United Independent Supporters' Association and they are very patronising."

"It gets up my nose. But this game will be like a cup final for us."

Should Bolton pull off the coup—and their reputation as a side who can lift themselves for special occasions is owed to none other than last season's League Cup final appearance, this term's league wins came against Blackburn, Arsenal, Wimbledon and Middlesbrough—then Colin Todd's team will be for-



Searching for the formula... the Burnden Park faithful in sombre mood
Cynthia Bateman on Wanderers' wish to derail an old enemy's title challenge in tomorrow's version of the Lancashire cup

stances begin to catch up with you and then it's hard to keep your heads above water."

He believes Bolton need a miracle to stay up, and there are those who believe he and McFarland were handed an impossible task from the start.

"It was already halfway through the close season when Bruce left," explains Sharrock. "The new joint-management team, which was a flawed concept anyway, were picking up the pieces less than a month before the players were due back for pre-season training."

"Lots of free-transfer players they might have wanted had been snatched up by them and some of the older players they could perhaps have got a couple of years out of had gone elsewhere."

Roy McFarland was alarmed at how few players there were in the squad. He only had 21, of which two were long-term injuries and two were goalkeepers. And the fixture list didn't give Bolton much of a chance.

New signings did little to alleviate the criticism that Bolton would not have lost Jason McAteer to Liverpool if Riich had stayed at the arrival of the successful £1.5 million Serbian Sasa Curcic only added to the sense of frustration at what might have been had McAteer stayed to play with him.

"The overall result is that we are left with a feeling that we have enjoyed the Premiership but it is a bit of an anticlimax and it seems to have gone so quickly. You blink and say, 'Well, that was the Premiership,'" said Sharrock.

His real fear is that if the miracle does not happen, Bolton's new-found support—they have gained 10,000 season ticket holders in the past two seasons, helping gates to an average of 17,000—will disappear. "People want to watch a winning side. I don't want to be a prophet of doom but I wonder how many will stay if we go down."

"Football is big business now and we have got to stay up. We have given away too many late goals. If games lasted 90 minutes we would be in the top six. But if we are going to go down, let's go out with a bang."

Vogts tribute to 'best ever'

HELMUT SCHOEN, the former West German's winning World Cup campaign in 1974, died on Thursday night aged 80.

Schoen was coach from November 1964 until June 1978 and his side were World Cup runners-up to England in 1966 and semi-finalists in 1970 before their triumph four years later. They won the European Championship in 1972 and were runners-up in 1976.

Berti Vogts, the current coach, said: "He saw only the good in players and in people in general. He did an unbelievable amount for the players and, for me, was the most successful ever."

Gordon Taylor, chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, is to join a UEFA working party on the future of players in Europe in

the wake of the Bosman judgment. He will go to Brussels next week to discuss the players' viewpoint with European Commission officials.

The Football Association yesterday began an inquiry into an incident during Birmingham's Coca-Cola Cup semi-final first-leg home defeat by Leeds on February 11 in which Leeds's Gary McAteer was hit on the head by a snooker ball.

Paul Kirby, a former business partner of the England coach Terry Venables, was sent to a doctor by a High Court judge yesterday and ordered to return with a note about the finger he sliced on a box file of court papers in the witness box on Thursday. Venables claims Kirby owes him £144,269 for clearing the debts of a failed pub company.

February, page 18

Old Firm pincer movement on European target-men

WHILE Walter Smith, the Rangers manager, travelled to Germany yesterday to check on the Bayer Leverkusen striker Ulf Kirsten, Tommy Burns of Celtic stayed at home to try to sign the Portuguese international striker Jorge Cadete from Sporting Lisbon.

The pincer movement on Europe was an indication of the Old Firm's need for reinforcements in a 10-match run-in to the Premier Division which may result in a catch for some time. The 30-year-old striker, who earned 49 caps for East Germany and has picked up 17 since unification, is out of contract at the end of the season and may wait until then in order to negotiate a better deal.

Smith planned to watch him in the home match against Borussia Mönchengladbach last night and fly to Aberdeen today.

which ended Scotland's interest in the 1994 World Cup. He also scored both of Sporting's goals in a 2-0 victory over Celtic in the UEFA Cup in 1983. Cadete is unlikely to be involved in Celtic's home match against Partick Thistle this afternoon. With Rangers playing Aberdeen at Pittodrie tomorrow, this is an opportunity for Burns's side to share the league leadership, at least temporarily. They are three points behind the champions, but with a significantly inferior goal difference.

Smith's pursuit of Kirsten may not result in a catch for some time. The 30-year-old striker, who earned 49 caps for East Germany and has picked up 17 since unification, is out of contract at the end of the season and may wait until then in order to negotiate a better deal.

Smith planned to watch him in the home match against Borussia Mönchengladbach last night and fly to Aberdeen today.

AN OTHER



Performance of the week: Paul Merson (Arsenal), whose inspired display Villa Park in the Coca-Cola Cup semi-finals went unrewarded.

A UNIQUE collection of handgear distinguished this quick-witted son of Bethnal Green's formative years. Having begun amid elderly red-coats, he stalled alongside some Jerry Percies, but then blossomed anew after ranting further west. Eventually he went into window repairs but later became better known for services to wig and pen.

Last week: Peter Larimer (Leeds United), York City, Toronto Blizzard, Leeds United.

TEAM SHEET

Blackburn v Liverpool Rovers recall the winger Stuart Hibberd after an ankle injury but will be without the midfielder Tony Stewart because of a back injury. The defender Andy Pearce is also out. Blackburn's captain, Alan Hogg, is back in the squad after a long-term injury.	Blackburn v Liverpool The French striker lost his last 11 matches but will be back in the squad after a long-term injury. The defender Andy Pearce is also out. Blackburn's captain, Alan Hogg, is back in the squad after a long-term injury.	Blackburn v Liverpool The French striker lost his last 11 matches but will be back in the squad after a long-term injury. The defender Andy Pearce is also out. Blackburn's captain, Alan Hogg, is back in the squad after a long-term injury.	Blackburn v Liverpool The French striker lost his last 11 matches but will be back in the squad after a long-term injury. The defender Andy Pearce is also out. Blackburn's captain, Alan Hogg, is back in the squad after a long-term injury.	Blackburn v Liverpool The French striker lost his last 11 matches but will be back in the squad after a long-term injury. The defender Andy Pearce is also out. Blackburn's captain, Alan Hogg, is back in the squad after a long-term injury.
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England loses
A

clubs start new league

SOME spooky things have been going on at Brentford. Their young midfielder Marcus Bent bought a mirror for his mum at Christmas, slipped carrying it through the door, dropped it on the floor, fell on the broken glass and required 44 stitches in a neck wound.

His seven years of bad luck have already begun. The other week on the pitch to Carlisle he was buying a cup of tea for the club physio when he spilled scalding water over his foot. Last Saturday he required three stitches in a leg wound picked up in the game against Bristol City.

And it was that game which kicked off another supernatural sequence. The match began 15 minutes late because of a bomb scare. Brentford then went 1-0 up, 2-1 down and drew 2-2.

Four days later Brentford were at Swindon. The kickoff was again delayed by 15 minutes, because of floodlight failure. Brentford then went 1-0 up, 2-1 down and, yes, drew 2-2.

MANCHESTER City have sent that Barings of bad things, and City fan, Nick Leeson, a selection from the club's leisure-wear range to his jail-cell in Singapore. Perhaps they should have added the warning: "Football teams like investments, can go down as well as up."

ANSWER: Joe Cocker, Jarvis Cocker and Les Cocker (Back Home, 1970).

Swans begin bulk buying

Super Day



As Mike Atherton's star has dwindled since Christmas Hansie Cronje's has risen. Tomorrow they meet again, in the World Cup

Mike Selvey reports from Rawalpindi

England's talisman loses his touch

ALTHOUGH it would be hard to tell from Mike Atherton's demeanour, which gives away about as much as a United supporter on a City flag day, the England captain must have cause for concern. Collectively his side are playing the sort of ramshackle cricket that characterised their last few weeks in South Africa; it has led to one disastrous defeat against New Zealand and a brace of comprehensive but inauspicious wins against the United Arab Emirates and Holland. The odds on them winning the World Cup — 8-1 before the tournament — are lengthening by the day.

On an individual basis the man who is the backbone of the England innings in one-day cricket, and not three months ago at The Wanderers played one of the great innings in Test match history. It is not a recent streak, for since he made 85 to provide the foundation of the team's win in Bloemfontein — their only one in the seven-match series against South Africa — seven innings have brought only 71 runs. Then there is his captaincy. On Thursday afternoon, with the opposition's innings little more than four overs old, the new ball swinging away nicely for Dominic Cork and Phil DeFreitas and one wicket already in the bag, he lost the plot, removing his slip fielders on the strength, it seemed, of a boundary edged along the ground through the slips, another through midwicket and a third glanced to fine leg. Had this been Australia, chasing 200 to win, then he might have had cause for concern. But this was Holland, a

part-time team in their first big competition chasing 280 against one bowler with more than 100 Test wickets and another who could end up with 300. It was a mistake, partly because of the net effect on the bowling, which was to make them bowl too straight, and partly because of the negative message it sent out of course we know we can beat these guys but better to be safe, eh? It may have been pragmatic but pragmatism never won a World Cup. Outwardly Atherton is not the least bit concerned. He said after the Holland game that he did not feel under pressure at any stage and was not worried about his lack of runs. "My turn will come" is his mantra. He has always taken a fatalistic practical approach to his run-scoring, believing himself neither to be in form nor out of it at any given time. But, one wonders, if this approach is Atherton's way of coping with the failures that can hit any sportsman, what effect does it have on the rest of the team? In each of the past two calendar years he has exceeded 1,000 runs, and such is his status that he has become almost a talismanic figure. If Atherton gets runs, the side may not win but they do not lose. If the captain fails,



No worries... Atherton is 'not concerned' by his loss of form but it is affecting his captaincy and the team FRANK BARON

though, the team subconsciously seem to wonder how they can succeed. In the one-day games, where Graeme Hick is very much the key player, failure by Atherton is less significant. Yet his mood — never, perhaps, sufficiently upbeat for the hurry-bury of the limited-overs game, despite the need for a cool head — and the way it translates to the players has a debilitating effect on the spirit. England and Atherton will need to be at the peak of their game tomorrow when they renew acquaintance with South Africa, their sternest test of the tournament yet. Hansie Cronje, whose batting form has flourished as Atherton's has diminished, has seen

his side burgeoning as a result, playing with supreme confidence, well-drilled bowling, fielding that at times defies belief, and always a game plan. Although England have all but qualified for the quarter-finals, Raymond Illingworth recognises the size of the task that confronts them and the need to win their final two group matches to restore the winning habit. "They are the form team at present and a win would be very pleasant," he said. "But we should have won four of those games over there. We were very stupid. Probably they set out to win the series first and we switched things around. In fact we didn't learn a great deal from

it and really should have played our best side for the first four games." Quite what that is remains unclear. England appear no closer to a settled plan than they were a month ago. Who, for example, should open the batting? In the last two games Atherton, whose value to England is in batting through the innings, has taken the middle order; opening, particularly when chasing a small total against the UAE, might have been in his and his side's interest in view of the strength of the South Africa seam attack. Illingworth concedes as much: "Any out-of-form batsman needs to play an innings to get himself going again. The South Africans squared

him up a bit and he's vulnerable around off stump." Alec Stewart is also going through a dreadful period and may easily lose his place to Robin Smith, who is championing the bit after injury. The biggest debate for them will centre on whether Pat Adams or Pat Symcox takes the spinner's role. Adams, say the South Africans, will play sooner rather than later. Bearing in mind last winter, that probably means tomorrow.

Athletics

Another Stern test

Stephen Bierley

THE pressure on young athletes, be it from parents, schools or coaches, is immense. Many, at the first hint of adversity, turn their backs on the sport and never return; a few nurture an abiding belief that a resurrection is possible.

One such is Britain's Vicky Stern, who will be running against France this afternoon in Glasgow at the ripe old age of 27. Stern, nee Quinn, has been out of the sport for more than a decade, during which time she qualified as a nurse, married a doctor and produced twin boys.

Now she is back with a chance of representing Britain in the European Indoor Championships in Stockholm next month and perhaps winning an Olympic place. She returned last year, winning the Midland 800 metres title, and then recently captured the AAA indoor title.

Stern, at 15, was told she should take a year off because of her injury problems and she simply drifted away. "When, because of injury, I stopped winning races as a teenager, then my life ended."

Kelly Holmes, one of Britain's main medal hopes in Atlanta this summer, was similarly lost to the sport, although not for as long. Stern has gained motivation from this.

"I looked back at the girls I was running against when I was 14 and none of them is competing now. After I had my children, I realised it was now or never, and Kelly's success has been a tremendous inspiration."

Two weeks ago Stern was made pacemaker when Mozambique's Maria Ntola set a world 1,000m indoor best at Birmingham. Stern's running was spot on. Today she faces strong opposition from Patricia Djate.

One race can make all the difference to a young athlete's career, and Scotland's Alison Curbishley is still reeling in the third place she gained behind her fellow Scot Melanie Neef and the Olympic champion Sally Gunnell in the AAA 400m flat in Birmingham. "I'm still up in the clouds and have been training off the back of that race," said Curbishley, who today will partner Gunnell. Curbishley, aged 19, has been considered as a potential successor to Gunnell in the 400m hurdles but she too has been plagued by injury over the past 18 months. "The biggest debate for them will centre on whether Pat Adams or Pat Symcox takes the spinner's role. Adams, say the South Africans, will play sooner rather than later. Bearing in mind last winter, that probably means tomorrow."

Pakistan put faith in psychiatrist

PAKISTAN, who play their opening World Cup game against United Arab Emirates in Gujranwala today, have employed a professional psychiatrist to help their players win the World Cup. Intikhab Alam, Pakistan's manager, said that Nazir Aziz is used to "re-

late how to win. It is a process of mentally fine-tuning them. It is all about how to relax during a match, how to concentrate and about self-belief." Calcutta's Eden Gardens will host one of the World Cup semi-finals, after a row over crowd safety was resolved yesterday.

Ice Hockey

Clubs start new league

Vic Birchall

CLUBS outside the Superleague have formed a British National Ice Hockey League. Although it does not seem to promote itself as a rival to the Superleague, the BNHL spokesman, the Slough Jets' general manager, the Gay Stefan, yesterday claimed it would "mirror" what is intended to be a fully professional league planned for September. The new BNHL will come close to what the Superleague are doing but on a smaller level," he said.

led by the Durham Wasps, who are owned by Sir John Hill, plus the Sheffield Steelers and the Manchester Storm, seven of the current British League's 24 clubs are believed to be committed to the Superleague. Nottingham and Pile are thought likely to follow, with the intentions of the Newcastle Warriors in doubt — all three were at today's meeting. The British Ice Hockey association's policy of allowing both leagues the right to administer their day-to-day affairs is seen as an important step forward. "We are now in a position where we control our own destiny," said Stefan. "The BNHL must prove to the public and sponsors that we have our act together, know which way we are going, can run the show in a very professional manner and not make the mistakes that maybe have happened in the past."

Hockey

Big guns face major test

Pat Rowley

CANNOCK'S Rob Crutchley and Guildford's Ian Jennings, the season's leading scorers in the league with 24 and 18 goals respectively, face their top two goalkeepers, Simon Mason of Reading and David Luckes of East Grinstead, in the National League this weekend.

Cannock, who returned to the top on Sunday, visit third-placed Reading tomorrow while the cup holders, fifth-placed Guildford, are at home to an in-form East Grinstead side who are now sixth.

With Cannock averaging five goals a game, Mason and Reading may be in for another busy afternoon. Last season, moreover, they defeated Reading 2-0 in the league and 5-3 in the cup. Cannock will also have to adjust for a rare outing on a water-based pitch, while Reading came into the game after what their coach John Copp called "our worst performance of the season", a 1-1 draw at Surbiton. Copp believes the keys to the game are "keeping Kalix Takher under control and retaining the ball long enough to play". With Southgate entertaining seventh-placed Surbiton tomorrow, only fifth-placed Old Loughtonians of the challengers look assured of winning this weekend. Having qualified for the European Indoor A division last week, they can now concentrate on the outdoor game and should improve their position and goal difference at Stourport.

Motor Racing

Schumacher's Ferrari is the pits as problems refuse to go away

THE Formula One world champion Michael Schumacher finally managed to test his new Ferrari F310 at Estoril yesterday but ground to a halt with electrical problems after negotiating only two bends. The car was towed back to the pit lane and pushed into the Ferrari garage by disgruntled mechanics.

Schumacher went out again in the car later in the day and appeared to have no immediate problems but, with the new season just over two weeks away, recurring technical problems with the car have been disappointing for the German.

Badminton

England in a Wright state over Uber qualification

Richard Jago in Prague

ENGLAND'S women will have to wait until the last moment today before finding out whether they have qualified for May's world team finals in Hong Kong after losing to Denmark yesterday.

They badly missed Joanne Wright, the doubles specialist who flew home on Thursday suffering from flu, in their 5-0 defeat by the strong Danish team. Joanne Muggidge was moved from the top singles spot to play doubles with Wright's regular partner Julie Bradbury, and Tanya Groves was given a world team championships debut in the third singles.

Results

World Cup Snooker

WORLD CUP SNOOKER (Prague) - Stephen Hendry (Wales) 5-0, 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, 7-4, 7-5, 7-6, 7-7, 7-8, 7-9, 7-10, 7-11, 7-12, 7-13, 7-14, 7-15, 7-16, 7-17, 7-18, 7-19, 7-20, 7-21, 7-22, 7-23, 7-24, 7-25, 7-26, 7-27, 7-28, 7-29, 7-30, 7-31, 7-32, 7-33, 7-34, 7-35, 7-36, 7-37, 7-38, 7-39, 7-40, 7-41, 7-42, 7-43, 7-44, 7-45, 7-46, 7-47, 7-48, 7-49, 7-50, 7-51, 7-52, 7-53, 7-54, 7-55, 7-56, 7-57, 7-58, 7-59, 7-60, 7-61, 7-62, 7-63, 7-64, 7-65, 7-66, 7-67, 7-68, 7-69, 7-70, 7-71, 7-72, 7-73, 7-74, 7-75, 7-76, 7-77, 7-78, 7-79, 7-80, 7-81, 7-82, 7-83, 7-84, 7-85, 7-86, 7-87, 7-88, 7-89, 7-90, 7-91, 7-92, 7-93, 7-94, 7-95, 7-96, 7-97, 7-98, 7-99, 7-100, 7-101, 7-102, 7-103, 7-104, 7-105, 7-106, 7-107, 7-108, 7-109, 7-110, 7-111, 7-112, 7-113, 7-114, 7-115, 7-116, 7-117, 7-118, 7-119, 7-120, 7-121, 7-122, 7-123, 7-124, 7-125, 7-126, 7-127, 7-128, 7-129, 7-130, 7-131, 7-132, 7-133, 7-134, 7-135, 7-136, 7-137, 7-138, 7-139, 7-140, 7-141, 7-142, 7-143, 7-144, 7-145, 7-146, 7-147, 7-148, 7-149, 7-150, 7-151, 7-152, 7-153, 7-154, 7-155, 7-156, 7-157, 7-158, 7-159, 7-160, 7-161, 7-162, 7-163, 7-164, 7-165, 7-166, 7-167, 7-168, 7-169, 7-170, 7-171, 7-172, 7-173, 7-174, 7-175, 7-176, 7-177, 7-178, 7-179, 7-180, 7-181, 7-182, 7-183, 7-184, 7-185, 7-186, 7-187, 7-188, 7-189, 7-190, 7-191, 7-192, 7-193, 7-194, 7-195, 7-196, 7-197, 7-198, 7-199, 7-200, 7-201, 7-202, 7-203, 7-204, 7-205, 7-206, 7-207, 7-208, 7-209, 7-210, 7-211, 7-212, 7-213, 7-214, 7-215, 7-216, 7-217, 7-218, 7-219, 7-220, 7-221, 7-222, 7-223, 7-224, 7-225, 7-226, 7-227, 7-228, 7-229, 7-230, 7-231, 7-232, 7-233, 7-234, 7-235, 7-236, 7-237, 7-238, 7-239, 7-240, 7-241, 7-242, 7-243, 7-244, 7-245, 7-246, 7-247, 7-248, 7-249, 7-250, 7-251, 7-252, 7-253, 7-254, 7-255, 7-256, 7-257, 7-258, 7-259, 7-260, 7-261, 7-262, 7-263, 7-264, 7-265, 7-266, 7-267, 7-268, 7-269, 7-270, 7-271, 7-272, 7-273, 7-274, 7-275, 7-276, 7-277, 7-278, 7-279, 7-280, 7-281, 7-282, 7-283, 7-284, 7-285, 7-286, 7-287, 7-288, 7-289, 7-290, 7-291, 7-292, 7-293, 7-294, 7-295, 7-296, 7-297, 7-298, 7-299, 7-300, 7-301, 7-302, 7-303, 7-304, 7-305, 7-306, 7-307, 7-308, 7-309, 7-310, 7-311, 7-312, 7-313, 7-314, 7-315, 7-316, 7-317, 7-318, 7-319, 7-320, 7-321, 7-322, 7-323, 7-324, 7-325, 7-326, 7-327, 7-328, 7-329, 7-330, 7-331, 7-332, 7-333, 7-334, 7-335, 7-336, 7-337, 7-338, 7-339, 7-340, 7-341, 7-342, 7-343, 7-344, 7-345, 7-346, 7-347, 7-348, 7-349, 7-350, 7-351, 7-352, 7-353, 7-354, 7-355, 7-356, 7-357, 7-358, 7-359, 7-360, 7-361, 7-362, 7-363, 7-364, 7-365, 7-366, 7-367, 7-368, 7-369, 7-370, 7-371, 7-372, 7-373, 7-374, 7-375, 7-376, 7-377, 7-378, 7-379, 7-380, 7-381, 7-382, 7-383, 7-384, 7-385, 7-386, 7-387, 7-388, 7-389, 7-390, 7-391, 7-392, 7-393, 7-394, 7-395, 7-396, 7-397, 7-398, 7-399, 7-400, 7-401, 7-402, 7-403, 7-404, 7-405, 7-406, 7-407, 7-408, 7-409, 7-410, 7-411, 7-412, 7-413, 7-414, 7-415, 7-416, 7-417, 7-418, 7-419, 7-420, 7-421, 7-422, 7-423, 7-424, 7-425, 7-426, 7-427, 7-428, 7-429, 7-430, 7-431, 7-432, 7-433, 7-434, 7-435, 7-436, 7-437, 7-438, 7-439, 7-440, 7-441, 7-442, 7-443, 7-444, 7-445, 7-446, 7-447, 7-448, 7-449, 7-450, 7-451, 7-452, 7-453, 7-454, 7-455, 7-456, 7-457, 7-458, 7-459, 7-460, 7-461, 7-462, 7-463, 7-464, 7-465, 7-466, 7-467, 7-468, 7-469, 7-470, 7-471, 7-472, 7-473, 7-474, 7-475, 7-476, 7-477, 7-478, 7-479, 7-480, 7-481, 7-482, 7-483, 7-484, 7-485, 7-486, 7-487, 7-488, 7-489, 7-490, 7-491, 7-492, 7-493, 7-494, 7-495, 7-496, 7-497, 7-498, 7-499, 7-500, 7-501, 7-502, 7-503, 7-504, 7-505, 7-506, 7-507, 7-508, 7-509, 7-510, 7-511, 7-512, 7-513, 7-514, 7-515, 7-516, 7-517, 7-518, 7-519, 7-520, 7-521, 7-522, 7-523, 7-524, 7-525, 7-526, 7-527, 7-528, 7-529, 7-530, 7-531, 7-532, 7-533, 7-534, 7-535, 7-536, 7-537, 7-538, 7-539, 7-540, 7-541, 7-542, 7-543, 7-544, 7-545, 7-546, 7-547, 7-548, 7-549, 7-550, 7-551, 7-552, 7-553, 7-554, 7-555, 7-556, 7-557, 7-558, 7-559, 7-560, 7-561, 7-562, 7-563, 7-564, 7-565, 7-566, 7-567, 7-568, 7-569, 7-570, 7-571, 7-572, 7-573, 7-574, 7-575, 7-576, 7-577, 7-578, 7-579, 7-580, 7-581, 7-582, 7-583, 7-584, 7-585, 7-586, 7-587, 7-588, 7-589, 7-590, 7-591, 7-592, 7-593, 7-594, 7-595, 7-596, 7-597, 7-598, 7-599, 7-600, 7-601, 7-602, 7-603, 7-604, 7-605, 7-606, 7-607, 7-608, 7-609, 7-610, 7-611, 7-612, 7-613, 7-614, 7-615, 7-616, 7-617, 7-618, 7-619, 7-620, 7-621, 7-622, 7-623, 7-624, 7-625, 7-626, 7-627, 7-628, 7-629, 7-630, 7-631, 7-632, 7-633, 7-634, 7-635, 7-636, 7-637, 7-638, 7-639, 7-640, 7-641, 7-642, 7-643, 7-644, 7-645, 7-646, 7-647, 7-648, 7-649, 7-650, 7-651, 7-652, 7-653, 7-654, 7-655, 7-656, 7-657, 7-658, 7-659, 7-660, 7-661, 7-662, 7-663, 7-664, 7-665, 7-666, 7-667, 7-668, 7-669, 7-670, 7-671, 7-672, 7-673, 7-674, 7-675, 7-676, 7-677, 7-678, 7-679, 7-680, 7-681, 7-682, 7-683, 7-684, 7-685, 7-686, 7-687, 7-688, 7-689, 7-690, 7-691, 7-692, 7-693, 7-694, 7-695, 7-696, 7-697, 7-698, 7-699, 7-700, 7-701, 7-702, 7-703, 7-704, 7-705, 7-706, 7-707, 7-708, 7-709, 7-710, 7-711, 7-712, 7-713, 7-714, 7-715, 7-716, 7-717, 7-718, 7-719, 7-720, 7-721, 7-722, 7-723, 7-724, 7-725, 7-726, 7-727, 7-728, 7-729, 7-730, 7-731, 7-732, 7-733, 7-734, 7-735, 7-736, 7-737, 7-738, 7-739, 7-740, 7-741, 7-742, 7-743, 7-744, 7-745, 7-746, 7-747, 7-748, 7-749, 7-750, 7-751, 7-752, 7-753, 7-754, 7-755, 7-756, 7-757, 7-758, 7-759, 7-760, 7-761, 7-762, 7-763, 7-764, 7-765, 7-766, 7-767, 7-768, 7-769, 7-770, 7-771, 7-772, 7-773, 7-774, 7-775, 7-776, 7-777, 7-778, 7-779, 7-780, 7-781, 7-782, 7-783, 7-784, 7-785, 7-786, 7-787, 7-788, 7-789, 7-790, 7-791, 7-792, 7-793, 7-794, 7-795, 7-796, 7-797, 7-798, 7-799, 7-800, 7-801, 7-802, 7-803, 7-804, 7-805, 7-806, 7-807, 7-808, 7-809, 7-810, 7-811, 7-812, 7-813, 7-814, 7-815, 7-816, 7-817, 7-818, 7-819, 7-820, 7-821, 7-822, 7-823, 7-824, 7-825, 7-826, 7-827, 7-828, 7-829, 7-830, 7-831, 7-832, 7-833, 7-834, 7-835, 7-836, 7-837, 7-838, 7-839, 7-840, 7-841, 7-842, 7-843, 7-844, 7-845, 7-846, 7-847, 7-848, 7-849, 7-850, 7-851, 7-852, 7-853, 7-854, 7-855, 7-856, 7-857, 7-858, 7-859, 7-860, 7-861, 7-862, 7-863, 7-864, 7-865, 7-866, 7-867, 7-868, 7-869, 7-870, 7-871, 7-872, 7-873, 7-874, 7-875, 7-876, 7-877, 7-878, 7-879, 7-880, 7-881, 7-882, 7-883, 7-884, 7-885, 7-886, 7-887, 7-888, 7-889, 7-890, 7-891, 7-892, 7-893, 7-894, 7-895, 7-896, 7-897, 7-898, 7-899, 7-900, 7-901, 7-902, 7-903, 7-904, 7-905, 7-906, 7-907, 7-908, 7-909, 7-910, 7-911, 7-912, 7-913, 7-914, 7-915, 7-916, 7-917, 7-918, 7-919, 7-920, 7-921, 7-922, 7-923, 7-924, 7-925, 7-926, 7-927, 7-928, 7-929, 7-930, 7-931, 7-932, 7-933, 7-934, 7-935, 7-936, 7-937, 7-938, 7-939, 7-940, 7-941, 7-942, 7-943, 7-944, 7-945, 7-946, 7-947, 7-948, 7-949, 7-950, 7-951, 7-952, 7-953, 7-954, 7-955, 7-956, 7-957, 7-958, 7-959, 7-960, 7-961, 7-962, 7-963, 7-964, 7-965, 7-966, 7-967, 7-968, 7-969, 7-970, 7-971, 7-972, 7-973, 7-974, 7-975, 7-976, 7-977, 7-978, 7-979, 7-980, 7-981, 7-982, 7-983, 7-984, 7-985, 7-986, 7-987, 7-988, 7-989, 7-990, 7-991, 7-992, 7-993, 7-994, 7-995, 7-996, 7-997, 7-998, 7-999, 800.

World Cup Snooker

WORLD CUP SNOOKER (Prague)

Stephen Hendry (Wales) 5-0, 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, 7-4, 7-5, 7-6, 7-7, 7-8, 7-9, 7-10, 7-11, 7-12, 7-13, 7-14, 7-15, 7-16, 7-17, 7-18, 7-19, 7-20, 7-21, 7-22, 7-23, 7-24, 7-25, 7-26, 7-27, 7-28, 7-29, 7-30, 7-31, 7-32, 7-33, 7-34, 7-35, 7-36, 7-37, 7-38, 7-39, 7-40, 7-41, 7-42, 7-43, 7-44, 7-45, 7-46, 7-47, 7-48, 7-49, 7-50, 7-51, 7-52, 7-53, 7-54, 7-55, 7-56, 7-57, 7-58, 7-59, 7-60, 7-61, 7-62, 7-63, 7-64, 7-65, 7-66, 7-67, 7-68, 7-69, 7-70, 7-71, 7-72, 7-73, 7-74, 7-75, 7-76, 7-77, 7-78, 7-79, 7-80, 7-81, 7-82, 7-83, 7-84, 7-85, 7-86, 7-87, 7-88, 7-89, 7-90, 7-91, 7-92, 7-93, 7-94, 7-95, 7-96, 7-97, 7-98, 7-99, 800.

World Cup Snooker

WORLD CUP SNOOKER (Prague)

Murdoch takes Super beating, page 9
Atherton feels the heat, page 11

The bad times at Bolton, page 10

Sports Guardian

United strain Keegan nerves

Marlin Thorpe

AT LAST Alex Ferguson has got what he wanted: Newcastle under pressure. On Wednesday their Premiership lead was cut to six points, after their first league defeat of a year which began with the Manchester United manager eager to see how Kevin Keegan's side would stand up to a tight run-in.

Newcastle are bound to come in for a testing time soon, he said in January. "It's hell when you lose the title late." That was part kidding but also an acknowledgment of the power of pressure. It caused United to throw away the title to Leeds four years ago and Blackburn so nearly to toss it to United last season. It is now Newcastle's turn to feel the strain.

Although Keegan's side have a game in hand, defeat at Manchester City today coupled with a United win at Bolton tomorrow would cut the lead to three points for United's visit to St James' Park on Monday week.

It is of course ironic that Manchester United are today looking to Ferguson for help. Ferguson trusting that City's instincts for Premiership survival will outweigh any reluctance to offer succour to Old Trafford.

It is of course ironic that Manchester United are today looking to Ferguson for help. Ferguson trusting that City's instincts for Premiership survival will outweigh any reluctance to offer succour to Old Trafford.

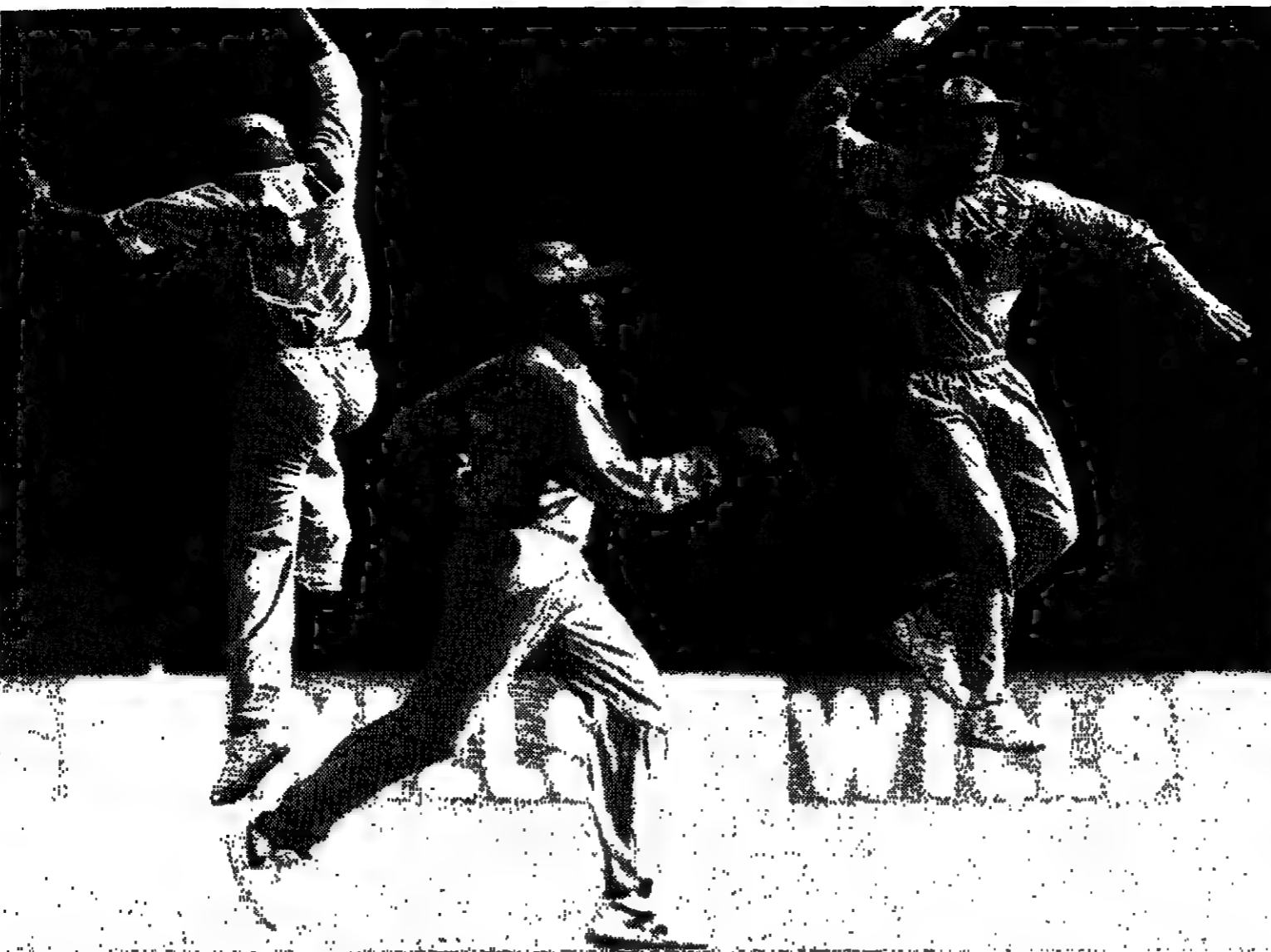
"City seem to do us a big favour every year," said Ferguson. "In the past they have beaten Leeds at a crucial time and drawn with Villa when we were competing with them in the championship. City won at Blackburn last season to open things up. Hopefully they can do it again."

If Keegan is looking for experience of the run-in, Batty's arrival brings an abundance, for the spiky midfielder played in each of those title-winning sides at Leeds and Blackburn. He will be in the stand today but Ginola returns after suspension to link for the first time with Asprilla. Manchester United are unchanged from Wednesday's defeat of Everton.

After spending £45 million in four years, Keegan has little excuse for not winning the title. Though that is the end to the cheque-book. "I'm not looking to buy anybody else," he said. "Hopefully Asprilla and Batty will help us win the league this season." And if not? "This is a squad for the next three or four years."

More football, page 10

WORLD CUP CRICKET



Early risers... Kenya players cavort with joy as the Australia captain and opener Mark Taylor is dismissed for six runs. PHOTOGRAPH: SHAUN BOTTRELL

McDermott hurt in Waugh game

Greg Baum in Visakhapatnam

AUSTRALIA re-emerged yesterday on a Waugh footing. It's not yet ready for all-out war. After weeks in no-man's land, the World Cup favourites finally fired their opening shots against Kenya. Only to be threatened almost immediately with the probable loss of Craig McDermott, their main strike bowler.

The extra rest granted to McDermott's strained calf by the decision not to play in Sri Lanka proved of little recuperative help and the muscle only to be threatened almost immediately with the probable loss of Craig McDermott, their main strike bowler.

McDermott appears most unlikely to be fit for Tuesday's crucial group match against India in Bombay. The Australia captain Mark Taylor said: "It's a recurrence of the same injury he thought he'd got rid of. A replacement is definitely an option." A decision on that score will be made today.

Australia were otherwise untroubled. The twin brothers Mark and Steve Waugh safeguarded their reputation with a partnership of 217, an Australia record in the World Cup. Mark's 130, was also the highest scored by an Australian in the competition, and Australia's 304 for seven was their highest total since the World Cup adopted the 50-over format.

Kenya were bold and brazen in reply but they could never hope to surmount such a score and ran out of overs at 307 for

seven, beaten by 87 runs. For Australia it was a minor skirmish in distant parts; Harcer battles in grander theatres lie just ahead. But there were aspects to their play which might embolden future opponents to think that all their faculties are not wholly in fighting trim.

Kenya won the early exchanges in both innings. In the morning they sent Australia in and claimed two cheap wickets with cut and swing before you could say Indira Priyadarshini Municipal Corporation Stadium, Visakhapatnam, and before the Waughes went on the warpath.

In the afternoon the Kenya captain Maurice Odumbe and wicketkeeper-opener Kennedy Oteino threatened briefly to emulate the Waughes with a robust partnership of 122 in 72 minutes. Kenya were ahead for 90 overs when comparing the running scores but ultimately they lacked the batting depth to sustain the effort.

A mid-morning breeze took the edge off an uncomfortably hot day, and the Waughes had the same effect on the game. Taylor and Ricky Ponting soon departed but the Waughes made their runs as their mother would once have expected them to make their beds: quickly, neatly and without fuss, although Mark added a couple of fancy tucks. He also hit a ruffle after passing 70 by offering three missed chances in two overs.

They fell finally six balls apart, and three more wickets

followed in the last six overs as Australia, with victory assured, sought to turn it into an annihilation.

When Kenya replied, Steve Tikolo was cut down by Ponting's blinding catch at point. But Odumbe and Oteino, sensing Australian hesitation, hit hard and heartily at fast and slow bowlers alike in a vivacious display. Only Shane Warne was spared.

Australia had used a seventh bowler before the partnership was broken as Odumbe (50) holed out to Michael Bevan. Oteino, overcome by cramps and dehydration, hit and hobbled to 32 before he had to retire hurt. By the time he returned, Warne had taken control and Kenya, having fallen far behind, were batting only for the honour.

Scoreboard, page 11

Blissett blurs the white line of racism



David Lacey

THE conclusion, reached in a new BBC Radio series about racism in sport, that there is a colour bar which prevents black footballers becoming managers is depressing though hardly surprising.

By now the number of black managers in the four English divisions should be reflecting the growth of black involvement in league football over the past 25 years. But beyond Viv Anderson, now Bryan Robson's assistant at Middlesbrough after a brief period as player-manager of Barnsley, the evidence of this happening is very slim.

The appointment of Luther Blissett as Watford's first-team coach, after the return of Graham Taylor to Vicarage Road as general manager, may be a step in the right direction but it is hardly a giant leap for mankind. According to the producer of Across The White Line, Blissett had applied for 22 posts without getting an interview.

At best the situation is dammingly disproportionate. If it is possible, in theory, to pick a strong all-black England team and still leave out Andy Cole and John Barnes it should not be unreasonable to ask why a footballer of Blissett's background has to wait for his mentor to return to get the chance to run a team.

This week one of the game's most intelligent voices wondered if Luther had taken one of the managerial courses open to players. That would have been a fair point if the English leagues had a proper system of instruction and qualification in football management.

As the recent example of Swansea City demonstrated, managers still tend to be appointed on an ad hoc basis and often at a chairman's whim. If budding managers needed a diploma it would be harder for the Blissetts, once they had

qualified, to be ignored.

The need to eradicate racism from football is supported by the game's authorities but internal problems, involving racial awareness and tensions, tend to be locked behind closed doors.

Old attitudes die hard. Traditionally English football has been played by the working class and run by the merchant class, neither noted for abundant liberalism where race is concerned. The general absence of black football managers may simply reflect the socio-economic attitudes governing the country as a whole.

Yet Brendon Batson, the Grenadan-born former Arsenal defender, has been assistant secretary of the PFA for 12 years and for a time Garth Crooks was its chairman. In addition black referees and linesmen are on the fringe list.

The ethnic mix in English football would be that much healthier for a stronger Asian involvement. But it has come a long way since The Encyclopaedia of Association Football, published 40 years ago, included a brief section under Coloured Players which omitted Charlie Williams, the Doncaster Rovers centre-half who later became a professional comedian. At least Williams encapsulated the spirit of the football manager even if he did not become one.

The prevailing view among black footballers that a black manager of a major club will not be seen in their lifetimes will alter only when attitudes change at board level. Given that some clubs continue to bar women from directors' tea rooms, the process is likely to be slow.

In 1981 the Crystal Palace chairman Ron Nones caused a rumpus with some insensitive generalisations on television about black players, for which he later apologized.

Nones was never a racist but until the game as a whole comes to terms with the profound changes which have been taking place in its make-up, former players like Blissett will continue to be denied the next logical step in their careers. Only when a black manager gets a vote of confidence from his chairman will true equality have been achieved.

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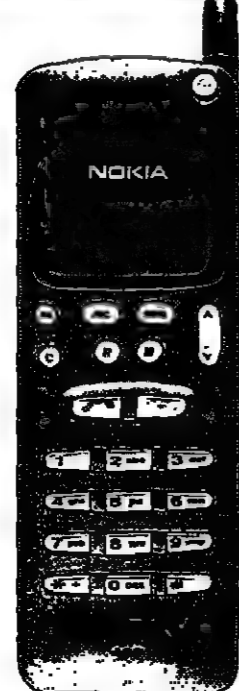
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Germany to pitch camp in Belfast

Michael Walker on Berti Vogts's plans to have a few days 'peace and quiet'

THE Germans always get the first beach, pool or a seat at the bar, they are always up at the crack of dawn securing their place.

So when it comes to preparing for Euro '96, it is no surprise that they have again sorted themselves out ahead of the rest.

A 30-acre site of council-owned playing fields in east Belfast may not seem like the obvious choice, but for 10 days in May Berti Vogts's players will train on public grounds on the industrial edge of the city. According to the Irish FA, he was simply looking for "somewhere different".

Vogts secured the not-much-sought-after deal after visiting the city early this year. Impressed by the pitches and the "peace and

quiet", he has arranged to take his squad to Belfast before their friendly against Northern Ireland on May 29 at Windsor Park.

Germany will then fly home for a further friendly with France before setting off for Manchester for their first Group D match against the Czech Republic on June 9.

Michael Novak, a German FA spokesman, explained how, in Vogts's eyes, the charms of Northern Ireland outweigh the comforts of home.

"In Germany during preparations in the past we have had 5,000 to 6,000 spectators every day," he said, "so it is a problem to prepare well for Euro '96. We are confident we will have 10 fine, quiet days in Belfast and that the population will give us a warm welcome."

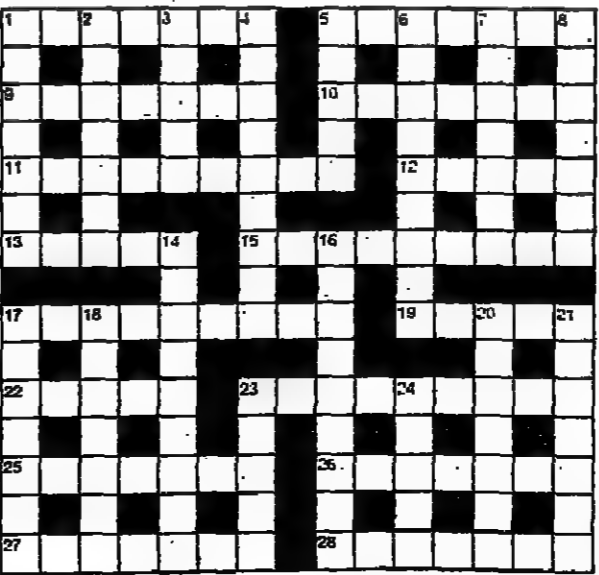
Vogts may also be right about not being pestered by German fans: a party of 63 have just cancelled their hotel booking for the Northern Ireland game because of unease over the political situation.

In the past week, three Catholic priests have returned to their pulpits after having been involved in scandals.

Guardian COLLINS Crossword 20,584

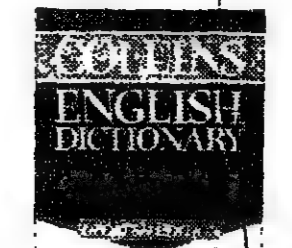
A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to Guardian Crossword No 20,584, Reference Marketing, Harper Collins Publishing, 77-85 Fulham Palace Road, London, W6 8JB, by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday March 4.

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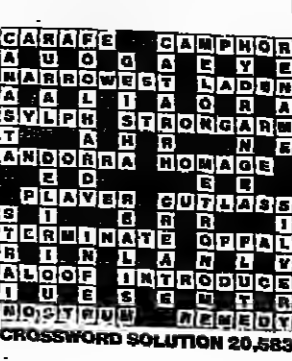


Set by Custos

- Across**
- 1 Figure from century past included in study (7)
 - 5 Young bird showing vitality, having ting (7)
 - 9, 10 Excellent, the Police, being the star act (7, 3, 4)
 - 11 Obsolete smock used by those on night-work? (4, 5)
 - 12 See passion flower abroad (5)
 - 13 Tennis star looks round the centre of Wimbledon (5)
 - 15 Agitated animal that's bursting into tent, losing head (9)
 - 17 Declared a month before getting honoured (9)
- Down**
- 19 Dressed and acted at college (3, 2)
 - 22 Sergeant-Major imbibing drink in place frequented by witches (5)
 - 23 Talkative, chat about our endless rule excitedly (9)
 - 25, 26 Worthless woman needs some form of miracle, getting luggage back (7, 7)
 - 27 Woman needing support, something difficult to achieve (7)
 - 28 You mustn't connect disciple, it's left (7)



- 2, 3 London, say, earns profits from sale of assets (7, 5)
- 4 Ngeli, silly man, is inattentive (9)
- 5 Scoring bird, for instance, do you see it? (3, 2)
- 6 Set called out, protected with armour (5, 4)
- 7 Colour like a rainbow I'd need flood in one upward slope (7)
- 8 Trudy retains one pound of libretist (7)
- 14 Odd master involved in fictitious GCSE causes tussle (9)
- 16 Prepared to fight? Not as much as a postal ship (5, 4)
- 17 I'd tripped up an antelope immobilise (7)
- 18 German city figure holding record (7)
- 20 Himalayan cedars from odd areas, intermingled (7)
- 21 Deftiver gets job on island (7)
- 23, 24 Senior member of family famous pawnbroker (5, 5)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,583

Saturday February 24
Sunday February 25
1996
Page 13

The Guardian Outlook

Over 3 days The Guardian is running extracts from PETER MANDELSON and ROGER LITTLE's new book on the Blair Revolution

Shock of the modern

Blair's new Britain

NEW LABOUR is a new type of politics. It is about modernising Britain by building on its strengths. But modernisation is about far more than red roses, sound bites and packaging. It is about creating a new synthesis to which all of the centre and left can subscribe:

- Whereas the left desired equality of outcome and the right, individual freedom to do whatever they pleased, New Labour sets as its goal, real equal opportunity for all and special privileges for none.
- Whereas the left appeared to argue for rights without responsibilities and the right that one was responsible for oneself alone, New Labour stresses the importance of mutual obligations.
- Whereas the left favoured more public consumption and investment and the right more private consumption and investment, New Labour gives immediate priority to investment — both public and private.
- Whereas some on the left wanted top-down centralised rules, administered by powerful bureaucracies, and the right wanted to privatise everything public and leave the rest to the market, New Labour advocates diversity and decentralisation, with bottom-up solutions and public goals sometimes achieved by market means.
- Whereas the old left saw its job as representing trade unions, pressure groups and the working class, and the right saw its role as protecting the rich together with powerful corporate interests, New Labour stands for the ordinary families who work hard and play by the rules.

For New Labour, the long-term interests of the country must take pride of place over short-term political pressures. Putting the long-term first demands that political leaders must lead. They must be more honest with the voters and less petty partisan with their opponents. They must welcome more open government and a more deliberative legislative style that ensures that new laws are made to last. New Labour must aim to construct a broad coalition of centre and

left support for radical change with a clear consistency of direction.

New Labour's distinctive emphasis is on community. This is not a soft, romantic concept — old dears at bingo nights in draughty halls, or the world of the tightly-knit mining community that now is dying away. Community is a robust and powerful idea, and is at the heart of the stakeholder economy New Labour wishes to create. It means teamwork — working and acting together in companies, in local neighbourhoods, in the country as a whole to get things done. It means mutuality — rights and responsibilities going hand in hand. It means justice — that all interests are served, not just those of the rich and powerful.

This concept of community is more than an individual obligation to be kind, loving and charitable:

- First, everyone should have a stake in society and no one should be excluded from it. That is why the abolition of long-term unemployment is central to Labour policy.
- Secondly, individuals cannot reach their full potential alone, and nor will the "free" market ensure it either. They need the opportunities that come from being part of a strong community that acts together to back up their efforts — for example, by ensuring a high-quality education system and a health service.
- Thirdly, rights carry with them obligations. Yes, young people have rights to a much wider range of opportunity, but with the backing of the wider community goes an obligation to the wider community. Yes, companies should enjoy the freedom to compete in a dynamic market, but along with that freedom goes responsibility to all their stakeholders — workers, shareholders, bankers, long-term subcontractors and customers.

Voters want to know how much of a change New Labour represents from old Labour, and what that change means in practice. What has actually altered from the policy stances in the Bennite aberration of the late 1970s and the early 1980s? Or from the corporatist approach of the Wilson and Callaghan governments from 1974 to 1979? And from the governing philosophy of earlier Labour administrations?

New Labour firmly rejects the notion that centralised planning and state control are the route to economic success. In practice, every past Labour government has wanted to see a thriving private sector within a mixed economy. Nevertheless, there are clear differences between past Labour governments' view of the mixed economy and New Labour's com-



The £5,000 public dowry that will give young couples a flying start

NEW LABOUR'S distinctive emphasis is on its concept of community. Strong families are the foundation of a strong community. Family breakdown is a symptom as well as a cause of a wider breakdown in society. The left-of-centre cannot be passive about these trends. Strengthening the family has to be a number one social priority.

Unsure about its fundamentalist associations has meant that in the past 30 years the left-of-centre has shunned the language of the family. New Labour, by contrast, recognises the importance of the family unit as a social institution for the proper bringing-up of children, where the difference between right and wrong is learned, and where a sense of mutual obligation is founded and practised. The stronger

the bonds that tie the extended family together, the more the family will be able to contribute to the larger responsibilities of care across the generations. Committed relationships and marriage itself can and should be strengthened directly by public policy. One of the greatest sources of social unfairness is the difference between those couples setting off in life with a flying financial start from their parents and grandparents, and those who have no such backing. Access to a lump sum of, say, £5,000 would make an enormous difference at that stage of life.

One option that Labour might investigate would be the provision of medium-term, deferred repayment, interest-free loans to young couples without access to capital of their own — in effect a form of public dowry, available just

once in a lifetime. Eligibility for these soft loans would be assessed on a scale relating to the economic circumstances of the couples themselves, taking into account the net wealth of their parents.

This would be rough justice for young couples with well-off parents who refuse their assistance, but this would be no different to the similar situation which currently exists with student support. Marriage would be the simplest test of eligibility; it would be for consideration whether to extend the scheme to couples who affirm a long-term commitment to each other but who, for reasons of their own, reject the form of marriage.

Such an arrangement, which could be dubbed Getting Off to a Good Start, would be run by the building societies

commitment to the rigour of the dynamic market.

New Labour welcomes competitive markets as the most efficient means of anticipating and supplying consumers' wants, offering choice and stimulating innovation. Competition is the only effective force that prevents capitalists opting for a quiet life. But, unlike the New Right, New Labour recognises that free markets do not automatically serve the public interest. Especially where large investments are required, they may fail to deliver efficient outcomes, and, left to themselves, markets tend to reinforce inequalities and may entrench privilege. Only in these circumstances should markets be regulated.

New Labour's belief in the dynamic market economy involves a recognition that personal incentives and rewards are necessary in order to encourage risk-taking and entrepreneurialism. Profit is not a dirty word — profits are the motor of private enterprise.

Differences in income and spending power are the inevitable consequence of markets. In the past, Labour only half acknowledged this truth, in a gesture towards equality, it imposed penal rates of tax. The party was pleased by these public gestures towards egalitarianism without appreciating the real economic consequences: poor rewards for top salaried management — except for those who felt satisfied by their perks.

Yet Labour, along with the Conservatives at the time, simultaneously tolerated, without public fuss, relatively low taxation of capital gains, in order not to destroy the incentives for entrepreneurship altogether. So go-ahead and enterprising individuals concentrated on share speculation in the City and on buying, developing and selling property — activities that promised large capital gains and were relatively lightly taxed. It was the perfect British combination of inefficiency and hypocrisy, deterring careers in management and damaging economic growth — and New Labour will have none of it.

New Labour does not regard public ownership of industry as necessary in order to manage the economy. The all-embracing commitment to nationalisation in the infamous Clause IV of Labour's 1918 constitution gave the unfortunate impression that Labour favoured public ownership on principle.

But times change, and we must learn from experience and live in the world as it now is. The truth is that the record of the old nationalised industries was at best patchy. New Labour believes that the social objectives which once led to the call for the utilities to be nationalised can in today's circumstances be met through more effective regulation. The New Labour agenda focuses on reform of regulation in order to prevent monopoly abuse and to fulfil broader social objectives.

New Labour believes that in a modern economy an efficient workforce must be motivated, well-educated and treated as partners in the enterprise. There is no place for the outdated view of the relationship between employer and employee as one of master and servant, or for institutional conflict between unions and management. New Labour stands on the side of the egalitarian style of management about which Far Eastern in-

ward investors have so much to teach Britain.

Ever since the publication of Anthony Crosland's *The Future Of Socialism*, in 1956, social democrats in his tradition have equated high levels of public spending with progress towards a more equal society. New Labour concurs with Crosland that stronger public services are essential for the good of the individual and society as a whole, but it would not agree that one can measure progress towards equality by the proportion of gross domestic product accounted for by public expenditure. An over-mighty and overly high-spending state is as much a barrier to Britain's success as a slimmed-down, minimalist state always deferring to crude market forces.

New Labour emphatically does not seek to provide centralised, "statist" solutions to every social and economic problem. Rather it aims to enable people to work together to achieve things for themselves and their fellow citizens. It is the job of the national government to set a right framework, not to run everything itself.

Old Labour often found itself divided on Europe. The left had an instinctive dislike of what

was felt to be a continental carol of capitalist-oriented Christian democracy. The Treaty of Rome was argued to be incompatible with Labour's ambitions for more nationalisation and planning.

New Labour recognises the role of the nation state and its historic significance and responsibility. But does not confuse symbols with reality. It knows that in the modern world it is only through Britain's committed participation in the European Union that we can regain true sovereignty — in other words, the political ability to tackle problems in the public interest — issues which have slipped beyond the nation state's individual reach.

Opponents claim that the Blair revolution is "dumping socialism" or "leaving the old members behind" or just "fishing for votes". The truth is that the New Labour agenda stands in a long line of ethical socialist thinking. But we do not stop at that. We know that we live in the new global economy and that there is no alternative to that. We stand for a strong society and an efficient economy because we need both, and each needs the other. That is the essence of our belief in One Nation policies and the principle of the stakeholder economy.

The Blair Revolution — can New Labour deliver? by Peter Mandelson and Roger Little is published next week by Faber, price £7.99

Peter Mandelson is Labour MP for Hartlepool and chairman of Labour's general election planning. Roger Little is managing director of Prima Europe, public policy consultants

Voters want to know how much of a change New Labour represents from old Labour and what change means in practice

TOMORROW: The Observer interviews Mandelson
MONDAY: How will Labour govern?

Wayne Koestenbaum wants you to look again at the London Review of Books

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The new lottery bonanza

THE Government is about to embark on a programme of Keynesian public works to stimulate the economy and, as a possible byproduct, to improve the feelgood factor in the run-up to the election. It is never presented like this, of course, but that is essentially what is happening with the proceeds of the lottery, the economic effects of which have received surprisingly little scrutiny. Some of the grandest projects were announced this week including: confirmation that London will host the £700 million millennium celebrations at Greenwich; that Salford will get a £127 million cultural centre dedicated to L S Lowry and that Cardiff Arms Park will be developed into a stadium for the next century. This has made up for the disappointment in Wales when proposals for a new opera house in Cardiff were turned down.

So far the effect of the lottery on the economy has been negative. Tens of millions of punters buy tickets every week rather than spend money on something else, thereby lowering retail sales. But soon that money will be converted from

consumption into capital expenditure. It will start to be spent on the biggest rolling programme of projects ever known in this country.

At present only £60 million out of £1.1 billion allocated for expenditure is actually being spent, but this will now start to change quite rapidly. It is reckoned that at least £9 billion will be made available over the next seven years. This understates what will actually happen because it is a condition of many of the projects that partnership funds are raised from other sources. It is reckoned that for every £1 raised on £1.60 is found from other sources. In the case of the Greenwich Millennium Exhibition the leverage is even greater. The lottery is giving £200 million, leaving the remaining £500 million to be raised from industry and other sources in the form of equity and sponsorship deals.

The economic effect doesn't end there because the Millennium Exhibition is bound to attract to this country and to London tourists who would otherwise not have come. They in turn will spend money on other things such as hotel rooms, food, souvenirs and transport, thereby having a multiplying effect on the rest of the economy. Many of them will also travel to other parts of the country, quite possibly taking in the Lowry gallery and other lottery projects as well. Some bright spark will doubtless dream up a scheme to take visitors from abroad on a dedicated package tour of all the large lottery sites (suitably funded by a lottery grant).

The biggest threat to the lottery's success is that the requirement to fund

partnership funds may rebound on itself. As Sadler's Wells in London knows to its cost, corporate munificence is finite. The historic Islington theatre won a £30 million lottery grant but so far has raised only £2 million out of £9.5 million of private funding needed. Faced with competition from Covent Garden and the new Tate Gallery of Modern Art at Bankside, the theatre is experiencing the reality of donor fatigue.

Since the distribution of lottery money could in theory carry on year in, year out for decades to come, it will have a truly dramatic effect on Britain's cultural and social infrastructure. It will quite possibly be the single biggest thing by which posterity will remember John Major's administration. Mrs Thatcher wouldn't give the proposal house room on the grounds that not only was it gambling, but state-sponsored too.

Equally interesting is whether lottery projects will help to keep Mr Major's hopes of staying in power alive. If the Government manages to avoid defeat in the House of Commons and struggles on until the spring of next year then the explosion of lottery projects of all sizes up and down the country — from the new village hall to the Millennium Exhibition — will help to contribute to the "feelgood factor", along with an expected rise in real incomes and a string of wind-fall capital gains from building society mergers and electricity rebates. This doesn't guarantee that the Government's popularity will rise, but it does give ministers something to cling on to. These days politics, like life, is increasingly becoming a bit of a lottery.

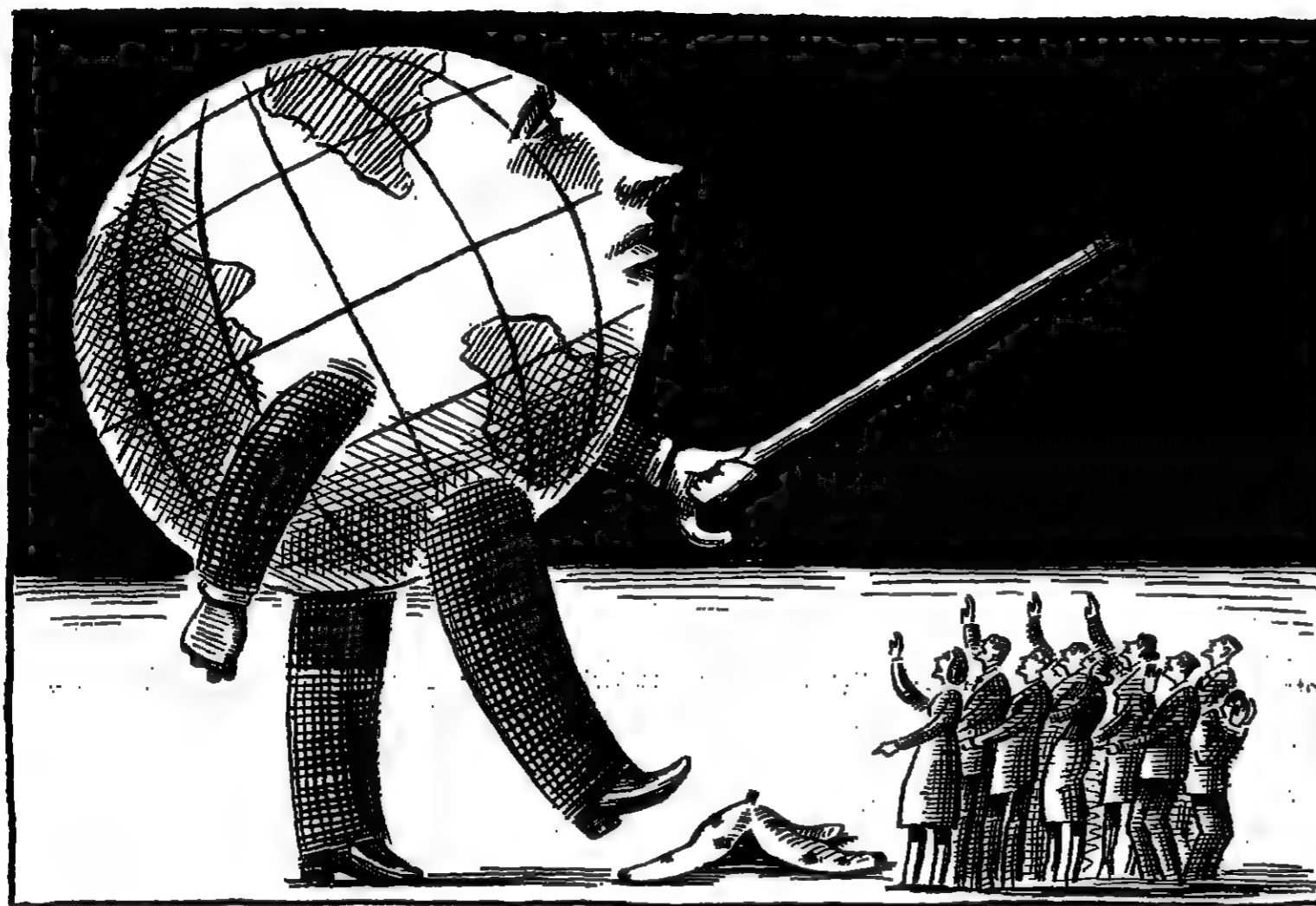
Going vertical in Bosnia

CARL BILDT, the international mediator for Bosnia, has given a gloomy picture of the prospects of a real return to communal peace. Viewing the Sarajevo suburb of Vogosca, where fleeing Serbs have trashed their houses and public utilities behind them, he warned that ethnic separatism now "could have repercussions for the whole of Bosnia in the future". The precedent now being created in Vogosca, the first of five suburbs being transferred from the Bosnian Serb republic to the Muslim-Croat federation under the terms of the Dayton agreement, is deeply depressing. Most of the Serb community has fled in fear of reprisals. Members of the International Police Task Force (IPTF) have been too thin on the ground and their role is limited to unarmed supervision. Mr Bildt's forecast is unlikely to be wrong but no one should be surprised by it, either.

Pictures on television of helpless IPTF monitors, besieged by angry local Serbs, may convey the impression that the civilian side of the international (no longer strictly speaking UN) effort in Bosnia has failed again. But the logic of ethnic separation was built in from the start to the Dayton Agreement, which creates two separate states while pretending that they are still one nation. Dayton has merely confirmed — with some modifications on the map — a division built on ethnic lines which the in-

ternational powers had been pressing on Bosnia for several years. Making progress in Bosnia is bound to be hard, whether on the civilian or military level. Last weekend's Rome summit was designed to bang heads together with the full implied weight of US diplomacy and Nato commitment behind it. Yet the Bosnian Serb boycott of military contacts with Nato officials continued much to the embarrassment of the Nato ground force commander. It is also clear that General Ratko Mladic remains defiantly in charge of military operations. On the Sarajevo government side, nothing has been done to create confidence among the Serbs of safety in the transferred suburbs. Yesterday federation police were already breaking rules agreed with IPTF by setting up checkpoints to the alarm of the local Serbs.

All of this only underlines the obvious: rebuilding Bosnia is not just an uphill struggle but an almost vertical climb and it will take twice as long as the most pessimistic prediction. Yesterday John Major voiced doubts as to whether the peacekeepers in Bosnia could achieve their task by the end of the year when, he said, it was "generally expected" that the force would leave. That expectation, imposed on the whole peace effort by domestic US considerations, has been problematic from the start. Mr Major went further by declaring that he did not think the US troops could or should leave unilaterally. This more realistic approach should be encouraged on all fronts: the commitment to Bosnia, whether military, political or economic, is long-term or it is not worth making.



Pride goes before a fall

Accidents such as the Sea Empress are an inevitable part of modern life. But, says MARTIN WOOLLACOTT, they leave deeper psychological scars that we might imagine. Illustration: PETER TILL

ACCIDENTS have become one of the main ways the modern world measures civilisation. As the Sea Empress crashed on and off Welsh rocks this week, we were all engaged in a familiar calculation. Underneath anger and regret about any particular accident is the bigger question of who is safe and who is not. Societies like our own fear regression to a time when risk was constant and loss of life and property a regular occurrence. Their fear relegates to the level of poorer societies who experience just that today. The famous journalistic rule of thumb — two dead

in Putney is worth as much space as 200 dead in the Philippines — is not an index of racism or proximity. It recognises the difference between societies dominated by wants and those dominated by worry, between societies who cannot pay enough for safety and those who can. The biggest worry of all, for those in the second category, is that they are slipping back into the first. The flurry of blame that surrounds every accident in the West can sometimes seem mindless. It is also true that some safety standards in the advanced world have been improving. The number of oil spills, for instance, has been

falling for 30 years and even though it is still lower than before. But what has happened is that our view of accidents, all the way from the single child killed on the road to the hundreds of thousands damaged by Chernobyl, has changed. Safety stands higher with us than it did, and the balance between benefits and dangers is perceived in a different way. The German sociologist Ulrich Beck has charted this shift to what he calls the "risk society". We are beginning to care more about safety than about material goods or their distribution. Accident strikes at our past, our present and our future. Accidents that involve loss of life strike at the present. Those that destroy valued objects — a castle in Windsor, an opera house in Venice, a famous old wooden bridge in Switzerland — strike at our links with the past. Those that damage the environment, like the wreck of the Sea Empress, strike at the future. Accidents of mobility have a special place in this dismal

scheme. The world economy's most distinctive characteristic is the ever increasing rate at which goods, people, and information are shifted round the world. The message that travel is safe is constantly repeated. The idea of safe movement reached its apogee in Star Trek, where a group of men and women in romper suits appeared to be careening around the universe in a large and comfortably furnished living room. Enterprise has very nice fitted carpets and never has an accident, except when aliens interfere. The truth we recognise in more realistic moments is that there is a trade-off between the cheapness of mass mobility and its safety. All forms of transport are in financial crisis. Car manufacturers struggle for new markets in the East. Airlines teeter on the edge. Aerospace firms fight for their lives. Shipbuilding firms are threatened species. Railways clutch at viability, in or out of state hands. We are in the strange position that one of the most dangerous processes in which we engage,

the volume movement of people and things, is financially a close-run thing, where costs are constantly being shaved and safety considerations put under pressure. It is said that officials of Lee Kuan Yew set up one of his tours of Africa some years ago not according to the shortest distances but on the quickest connections but on the basis of the safety records of the African airlines involved. In an age of mass tourism, we all know the feeling. We may worry about coach crashes in Europe, what will happen to safety standards on the railway in Britain after privatisation, or why, in the United States, equipment failures caused air traffic control breakdowns at least 11 times in 1994-95. But the accident rates in developing countries are horrendous and are getting worse as their economies grow and enter into deeper relationships with the West. Death tolls in the hundreds — 300 killed in an Indian rail crash last summer, 400 in a Philippines ferry wreck — are routine.

Cars don't kill that many people in Europe and America because they have been separated from people and to some extent from each other. As car manufacturers move into Asian markets, where they expect to find most of the business that will keep them going in the next 20 years, accident rates are approaching massacre levels. In Vietnam, for instance, with 300,000 cars on the roads, there are 5,000 road deaths a year — peasants mown down by trucks or tipped by the bushful into rivers and ravines.

If we export technology without its safety infrastructure, the developing world exports its standards to us, in the form, for instance, of some of the ships and crews who carry goods to our shores. More generally, our demand quickens their economies, increasing the rate of accident there, while their low costs put pressure on our costs at home, increasing the rates of accident here. Corruption thrives on the feeble attempts at regulation. In China there were arrests after 225 people died in a cinema fire. In Seoul, city officials were detained on charges they took bribes to overlook safety violations after a department store collapsed in June last year, killing 458 people and injuring 900. But treating accidents as crimes, while ignoring the conditions that produce them, is not effective policy.

THERE has been a moment of class society, Beck argues, where the principal preoccupation is equality, to the risk society, whose "basis and motive force is safety". But he adds that old judgments of utility, profit and advantage persist, and it remains unclear whether what he calls the "solidarity of anxiety" will prevail over individual calculations. It is this unknown, whether we will shape our societies so that we can all avoid dangers or whether they will be split into groups competitively seeking safety on their own terms, that looms behind every major accident.

The impact of those accidents, as they take lives or livelihoods or damage what is left of the natural world, is more than the sum of individual grief. In the faces of survivors and the bereaved, from Ebeol to Bihlmeier, can be seen shock at being thrust out of the circle of safety, a shock from which many never recover. When an explosion destroys a building and a bomb is suspected it is sometimes announced that, after all, it was "only" an accident. In fact the accident is more truly shocking, since a bomb is destruction by intent while an accident represents a greater loss of human control and a more fundamental lack of foresight.

On guard, M Chirac

Rattling the bars



Ian Aitken

IT ISN'T often that this column has advice for a president of the French Republic, but Jacques Chirac's announcement that he is abolishing compulsory military service — something which has survived in France since revolutionary times — moves me to do so. I think he should be careful. China's plan — unexpectedly startling to us Brits — is that France needs an entirely professional army just like ours. But this idea suffers from one very serious defect: unlike our soldiers, the French military isn't accustomed to staying out of politics. French democrats shouldn't forget that the Fourth Republic was destroyed and General de Gaulle brought to power by politically-minded soldiers. And in case some Gaullist enthusiasts see that as a recommendation for military intervention, the general also came close to being deposed by the same politically-minded soldiers only a few years later.

In effect, he was put into the Elysee by generals and colonels who expected him to carry on with the murderous war to keep Algeria French. When they discovered that he had double-crossed them, and intended to give the Algerians their independence, they attempted a second coup. I was in Algeria at the time, and I saw what happened. These "professional" officers, most of whom were in on the plot, ordered their soldiers to seize strategic points. The soldiers, most of whom were conscripts, didn't just refuse — in many cases they arrested their mutinous officers.

This was the main reason why the attempted coup failed. In effect, the Fifth Republic and French democracy was saved by the teenagers of "le contingent", as the call-up boys are called in France. The professional army was on the other side — and especially

that most "professional" of all France's military units, the foreign legion. Let's hope that Jacques Chirac has some other source of reliable support, should he ever run into trouble with his professional army. He may need it one day, just as Le Grand Charles did.

THERE aren't many plus points in the horrible environmental disaster unfolding in the waters outside Milford Haven. Perhaps the only one is that it finally puts the skids under the Tory Party's defence of the House of Lords, and in particular its attachment to hereditary peers. The performance of the very junior transport minister sent down to oversee the salvage operation has, in most people's perception, been lamentable. Worse, he has even attempted silly witticisms at press conferences, while the nation's TV screens were recording the dreadful truth.

But this Bertie Wooster character exactly fits the kind of person who is presented as the main justification for the parliamentary survival of hereditary peers. Like they say, he got into the corridors of power much earlier than elected politicians, let alone life peers. And we are expected to be pleased about this. For the Viscount Gochen, parliamentary secretary at the Department of Transport, was born in 1963. He was poll-voted into parliament by the early death of his father. Because he is young and thrusting (unlike his superannuated colleagues) he seemed suitable for ministerial office. And he has made a complete cock of it. So much for the hereditary principle.

NOT even Ann Widdecombe, a woman who makes Michael Howard look weak, has attempted to defend the release of fraudster Peter Glosens after only four years of a 10-year sentence. Looking like the Black Avenger, she went on to bewail the event on behalf of the Home Office. So why did it happen? Alas, she explained, it was the fault of the law as it currently stood. Which sounds fine — until one remembered that her lot have been making the laws for 17 years.

My favourite boozier, the Prince of Wales in Highbury, often gets letters addressed to "The Prince of Wales, Highbury, England". Now we look forward to getting Charles's e-mail too. It's become the first pub in England to go on the Internet.

Smallweed



WITH that thoughtless arrogance which the rest of Britain has learned to expect from the capital, the art critic of the London Evening Standard, Brian Sewell, condemns the award of

£64 million of lottery loot to create a cultural complex in honouring L S Lowry. Lowry representing Manchester, this posturer points, is "plain, barking lunacy". When will southerners learn that Salford, though part of Greater Manchester, is not part of Manchester but a separate city with its own treasured history? Were Sewell now to show his face in that city, which if he has any sense he will not, he would promptly be set upon by Salfordians, who would tell him that Salford is older than Manchester, having got its charter earlier, opened the first free public library and created the first smokeless zone; that it's the birthplace of, among others, the physicist Joule, the actor Albert Finney and the (Manchester) footballer Ryan Giggs, and the terminus of the Manchester Ship Canal (which never sets foot in Manches-

ter); that it boasts its own cathedral and university, has established in Salford Quays a model of waterside redevelopment which others have cribbed, and is host to the only Rugby League team to have beaten Wigan in cup competition in eight years. Then I guess, to the cheers of the 228,000 population, they would boot the protesting aesthete into the Ship Canal.

SMALLWEED'S nomination of Sir Richard Scott as Britain's first president, is hereby withdrawn. Not because he failed to hand out findings in somnolence. What he did was to say to Parliament: you are grown-up people; you are there to police the Executive; this is what the Executive has been up to; if you don't like what I've revealed, action is up to you. Accordingly MPs have the chance on Monday and

afterwards to vote on the issues of Parliamentary supremacy which so many are always on about. Very few will, but that's their fault, not Scott's.

No, his fault is his double negatives. Since the President will be above politics, there may not be much he can meaningfully say. But we can't afford to begin our lives as Republicans with a head of state who on great occasions is likely to say: "We in Britain do not wish not to build a better, more prosperous society". Or: "If this country fails to fail to stand up for anything, it does not fail to fail to stand up in this column when Yeboah was signed, should the footballer lose his manager's wrath it was possible that Wilkinson might address him as follows: "Hal Obey, Yeboah"; thus coupling one of the ripest palindromes in British sporting history. Confirmation from

Though some reports yesterday failed to credit him, the decision of the United Oxford and Cambridge University Club to abandon its sexist practices is Dr Butler's achievement. He deserves a life peerage at least.

WITH moaning excitement, Smallweed read this week that the manager of Leeds United, Howard Wilkinson, was greatly displeased with his talented (but lately less fecund) Ghanaian striker, Tony Yeboah, because of the player's allegedly late return from the African championships. As pointed out in this column when Yeboah was signed, should the footballer lose his manager's wrath it was possible that Wilkinson might address him as follows: "Hal Obey, Yeboah"; thus coupling one of the ripest palindromes in British sporting history. Confirmation from

Elland Road that this expression has been used will be richly rewarded by Smallweed: with a ticket to Wednesday's game between Cowdenbase and Livingston, perhaps.

AS Iogle the coverage of Princess Diana's visit to Pakistan, I catch myself meditating that if it's all a further campaigning ploy in what I am coming to see as the Monarchical Party primaries, in which Diana is Pat Buchanan and poor old Prince Charles looks more and more like Bob Dole. Is this because a Smallweed has read too many reports from New Hampshire? Or am I a foul old cynic? Or am I a realist?

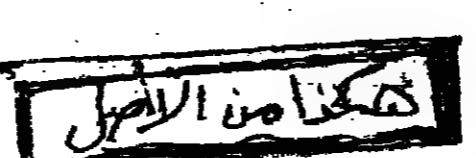
THE TORY MP David Lighthorn died after the university rugby match, which is always played in the first week of December. Under a gentle-

man's agreement, reached when Francis Fry was Chief Whip, the main parties undertake to fill parliamentary vacancies within three months of the death of a sitting member. According to Smallweed's famously fallible arithmetic, three months from the first week of December is the first week of March, so the writ should have been moved at the very latest by the day before yesterday. What does this tell us, I wonder, about the maintenance of gentlemanly standards in our governing party?

A SCHOLARLY letter from Southampton points out that the Beachcomber column in the Daily Express was called "By The Way" and not Beachcomber, and adds that before J B Morton made it his own, it was written by D B Widdowson Lewis. It also asks whether the Pedant

who sometimes invades these proceedings is the progeny of the Frodoose, who persecuted Beachcomber in much the same way. As an old Beachcomber addic, Smallweed is not unaware that this may be not be entirely impossible. A pedant writes: You're as bad as Sir Richard Scott. Smallweed replies: You're as bad as Frodoose.

I HAD somehow escaped my notice until yesterday, when Gwenneth Bransby-Zachary of GBZ Management, who's his agent, revealed it in the Times, that the Royal Academy of Music has on its payroll a Professor of Accordion Studies. Is there any field of human endeavour, I wonder, which no longer has a professor? Such titles have such haunting music about them that I think I might start a collection.





Tending the faithful... Monsignor Michael Buckley, questioned about sex allegations by the police and later released, is a flamboyant man with a reputation for faith healing and homespun philosophy

Confessions of a priest

Two priests have recently been cleared in sex scandals. MADELEINE BUNTING reports on how those involved have fought back and how, in this country at least, the Catholic Church is responding when allegations are made

IN THE past week, three Catholic priests have returned to their pulpits after having been named in scandals. But once allegations of impropriety have besmirched a priest's reputation, can he ever recover? This is the question being pondered this weekend by two English priests, Fr Michael Hollings and Monsignor Michael Buckley, and an Irish bishop, the Rt Rev Brendan Comiskey.

Cardinal Basil Hume told parishioners at mass at St Mary of the Angels church in Bayswater last Sunday that the 74-year-old Fr Hollings was to be reinstated after a period of administrative leave. "The police have decided that they have no basis for any action to be taken," said Cardinal Hume, adding "I would like to pay tribute to Fr Michael for the outstanding work he has done over the years."



Ireland's Bishop Brendan Comiskey (left) may follow Eamonn Casey (right) - now in Ecuador - into exile



"Please forgive me for what I did. Accept I wanted to help, not harm you." One of his staunchest allies was his cousin and old friend, the Duke of Norfolk, and Fr Hollings has spent some of the last few months at the duke's home, Arundel Castle. But the experience has reportedly left him "shattered". There are rumours of parishioners demanding an inquiry, angry at how this elderly man, only a few months before he is due to retire, was forced through such a humiliating experience.

Such provisions have left priests feeling exposed and unsupported by the Church, and it is this feeling which Mr Buckley is planning to tap. It emerged at the National Conference of Priests last September, when a motion was proposed asking that "adequate safeguards be given to protect priests from the consequences of false accusations" was only narrowly defeated.

From my limited knowledge, I would hazard the guess that there are many, many men and women who are most deeply devoted to the young and who never fall from high standards of morality in their regard but are nevertheless, consciously or subconsciously, motivated by sex, at least in part. Now this is good, not bad; it is part of human motivation. It is not to be stunned, but to be controlled for the welfare of the other, and younger, person.

avoid such catastrophes here, the Church set in place stringent guidelines in 1994; allegations must be reported to the police immediately without informing the priest involved; the Church cannot undertake any investigations; as soon as allegations have been made, the priest must be removed from the parish and placed on administrative leave.

What fuels a heightened suspicion of priests is a well established literature on how unresolved many priests' sexuality is. In a book Fr Hollings wrote some time ago called 'The Pastoral Care of Homosexuals', he raised the issue with shrewd perception, emphasising the importance of self-control.

Public dowry for young

Continued from page 13 and mortgage lenders, who have extensive experience of assessing a couple's financial position as part of the process of awarding a mortgage, there would of course be some net cost as a result of deferred loan repayments. This would need to be met by the government, which would make non-interest-bearing deposits with mortgage lenders in order to match the liabilities attached to the loans.

The tax and spend implications of any other strategy would be quite unworkable. The thrust of policy should be to strengthen the family's capacity to cope, while recognising that government should play a vital role in underpinning family support where it cannot do so. The tax system must be reformed in order to reinforce the extended family and facilitate mutual support.

A massive failure to Press the point



IF THERE were any justice in the world, the Government would be defeated over the Scott Report on Monday. And if they did not resign there and then, there would be a confidence motion on Tuesday, and they would lose that too. And on Wednesday, John Major would tell the Cabinet that he was to resign as a general election on March 28. Tony Blair would be prime minister by Easter.

Peter Thurnham in not supporting the Government as well as even though such a revolt may end in the Tory party's electoral defeat? In other words, don't hold your breath. But whose fault will it be if the Conservatives survive? There will be many suspects. Some will pin the offence on the wicked government machine, which used its eight days advance notice of the report to concoct a version which it has sold with ruthless and powerful effect ever since. Others will blame the stubborn political reality of the turkeys-and-Christmas syndrome, which means that no one on the Government side wants to live with the label of being The Man Who Brought Down The Last Conservative Government.

Labour circles. The case against the media is as follows. First, that it built up excessive expectations about what Scott would say and the damage it would do, so that the actual report was an anti-climax. Second, that it fell for the Government's lies on the day it was published. Third, that it then spent more time reporting the Government's media coup than it did in actually reading the report. Fourth, that even after the report was published, it accepted the Government's claims that the story has peaked. Fifth, that it therefore lost interest in Scott himself and even today is only interested in the result of Monday's vote. Finally, and embracing all the foregoing, that it hasn't bothered to read the report.

There is an element of blaming the messenger for bringing bad news here. And if the press built Scott up in advance, and was fixated on the Government's media spinning operation, or failed to read the report properly, then surely these same charges can all be proved against Opposition MPs too? That is true too. You could even add that for Labour to go round complaining that the story has been allowed to go off the boil is an admission that it has. But even so, the charges cannot be so easily dismissed.

press has a duty to ensure that lies are exposed. Yet, with a few distinguished exceptions, most of us have not made as much effort as we should have over Scott. Collectively we stand accused of laziness, treating it as a one-day wonder and not burrowing more assiduously into the mass of lies documented in the report.

Expecting anyone to make sense of it all. Even so, and with all that said, I think the press — and the broadcasting media in particular — have let the story go too quickly and too lightly, principally because it is too much trouble to follow it through. In a world of diminishing literacy, in which people apparently do not read anything any longer, it is perhaps unreasonable to expect journalists any more than anyone else to read Scott's hundreds of densely argued pages. But the media's relative neglect of Scott's text and revelations are striking, nevertheless, especially given the claims we make and the public position we crave.

Why, for example, has the television not produced a more systematic explanation of Scott's findings? Why have so many newspapers — though not this one — reduced Scott to the odd down-page story about whether this or that MP is wavering? Is it because all the questions arising from the report have been asked? Of course not. Why has Labour had to do so much of the fligging that the press should have been doing itself? Why have government departments been given an easy time? Where is Alan Clark and why hasn't he been carved into pieces about the report?

GET A MOVE ON

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Ship of oil and fools

THREE years ago, the junior pupils of my school wrote to Lord Calhoun, then the Minister for Shipping, to voice their concern at the environmental disaster caused by the oil tanker *Erar*. Watching the tankers passing the windows of our classroom, they had become aware that this was a problem they could face one day. They received a reply which assured an inquiry and every possible measure to make our waterways safe.

Last autumn, they watched the *Borgia* stranded on the cliffs at Mill Bay, feeling safe that the double hull had worked. Last Friday morning, the feeling of safety and security was shattered: these tankers, it transpired, are not all double-hulled. There are not so many tugs available now as there used to be.

I wonder if Lord Goschen could help me plan my assembly for Monday. What will I say? We have spent the last week watching our environment and economy being destroyed. It has been like slow torture, the false confidence of those in charge, the feelings that the action taken was again for monetary ends, not for concern for the environment.

It will not be enough to tell the children that everyone on the ship worked hard to save it, nor that the salvage team were working against difficult weather. They will see the dead and dying birds; they will miss the crab in the rockpools next summer; they will play on the oil-soaked beaches.

After this week there are few people in this area who will trust the Government to make decisions which will protect us and our environment, as far as possible, against pollutants. Lord Goschen can be assured of one thing. He will be receiving a set of letters from the pupils of Dale School next week. We will not give up on our world.

Val Securook, Dale County Primary School, Dale, Havordwest, Pembrokehire SA82 3GZ.

Perverting the truth of abuse

GERALD HANNON (Professor or pervert, G2, February 21) implies a link between gay sex and paedophilia. There is no more of a link than between heterosexual sex and molesting girls. Paedophiles frequently excuse their behaviour by quoting this spurious "connection".

In five years of work with sex offenders we have met some of the minority who abused boys who subsequently abuse. We also meet survivors' groups. We meet hundreds of men who as boys "suffered in silence" and may have appeared not to mind. In fact they have carried rage, shame, insecurity and guilt for many years.

Hannon's quotations about New Guinea and Ancient Greece are irrelevant. Behaviour needs to be viewed in the context of here and now. Men abuse power to manipulate boys and girls into apparent co-operation, which increases the children's feelings of guilt about the behaviour. Abusers

often Britain. Some hospitals, local authorities and police forces still have to fall back on a cook, a porter or anyone they can find in an emergency.

More and more public agencies are now following the example of the increasing number of those who have used Language Line and its telephone interpreters in 140 languages, who are at the service of subscribers within a minute or so of being called.

If the coastguards had used Language Line they could have been in immediate communication and the *Sea Empress* incident could have been a little less disastrous. Lord Young of Dartington, Chairman, Language Line, 10 Victoria Park Square, London E2 9P7.

WHY is it that every time we suffer a major oil spill in nearshore waters, a distracting debate ensues about the inadequacy of safety measures to deal with such disasters? In the light of your article (Extent of oil pollution makes spill drop in the ocean, February 22), suggesting that such catastrophes only account for 2 per cent of hydrocarbons entering the global environment, surely the overriding issue is our over-dependence on oil and the urgent need to invest heavily in resource conservation, whilst finding alternative and more benign energy sources.

Jim Fielder, Waste Watch, Gresham House, 24 Holborn Viaduct, London EC1 2BN.

WHY is it that we as a maritime nation always have to rely on foreign tugs to remove wrecks from our shores? Surely the Admiralty, which has warships, minesweepers and fishery protection vessels should also possess tugs to protect our shores. If British shipowners opt out of that responsibility, Frank Hughes, 57 Repton Drive, Hainthorpe, Crewe CW1 1SA.

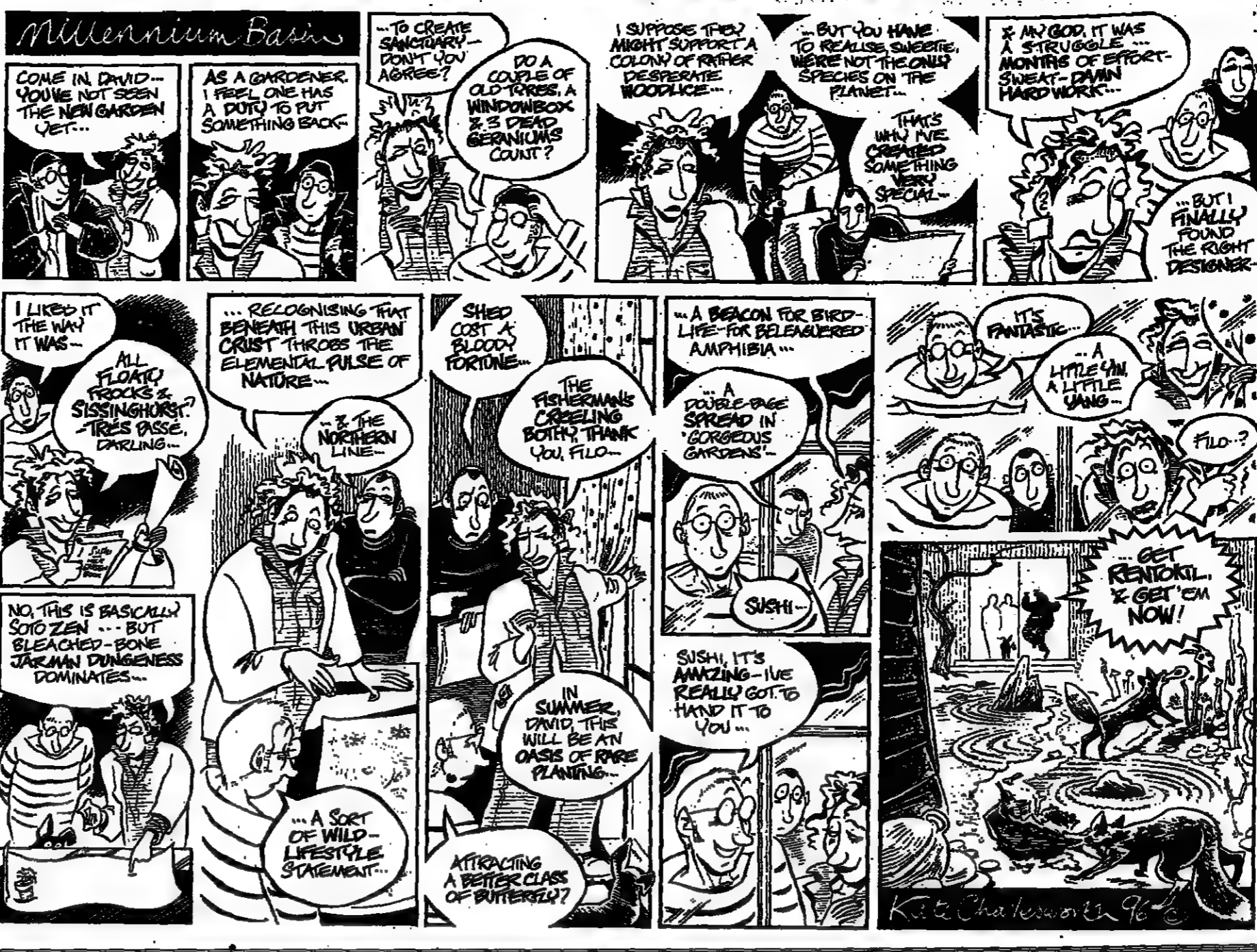
NOTE Peter Bottomley talking the Diary to task in the defence of accuracy in reporting facts. This must have made for some interesting debates over breakfast if he ever discussed his wife's role at the Department of Health. Brian Bethell, 3 Cherry Drive, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 8HF.

WITHOUT wishing to prolong this correspondence, I have to say that Julia Hartley-Brewer (Letters, February 23) has shown herself to be as unrelenting in her dealings with me as Matthew Norman has shown himself to be malicious. They deserve each other. Even if her quotation of me were accurate, which I dispute, she was admitting to having leaked the contents of a conversation with one of her own sources to a journalist whom she knew to be hostile to him.

Dr Julian Lewis, Conservative Research Department, 22 Smith Square, London SW1P 3HH.

REGARDING your correspondence over Cezanne's supposed ethnic background. In fact, the French word *Creole* means a person of white race born in colonies, such as Les Antilles, La Reunion, La Guadeloupe, L'ile Maurice, etc. When Ambrose Volland mentioned that Cezanne's mother was from distant Creole origin he was using the word in the French context. R.J. Claudiou-Baker, Albertine Cottage, Deal, Kent CT14 0BY.

DAN Glaston (The Theme Machine, February 17) quoted Michael Winner as saying "If they open a theme park based on Ealing Studios they'll go broke. Like the studio. Sorry to disappoint — despite the receivers being called in, Ealing Studios has survived and is currently flourishing. Simon Mallin, Business Manager, NFTS Ealing Studios, London W5 5EP.



Tory stories and survival

ANOTHER letter to your paper from Peter Bottomley MP about truth and honesty (February 23). Well, at least we can be sure how he will vote in Monday's debate on the Scott report can't we.

Andrew Walker, 12 Farthills, Revery Avenue, Wibsey, Bradford BD6 3BE.

NOTE Peter Bottomley talking the Diary to task in the defence of accuracy in reporting facts. This must have made for some interesting debates over breakfast if he ever discussed his wife's role at the Department of Health. Brian Bethell, 3 Cherry Drive, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 8HF.

WITHOUT wishing to prolong this correspondence, I have to say that Julia Hartley-Brewer (Letters, February 23) has shown herself to be as unrelenting in her dealings with me as Matthew Norman has shown himself to be malicious. They deserve each other. Even if her quotation of me were accurate, which I dispute, she was admitting to having leaked the contents of a conversation with one of her own sources to a journalist whom she knew to be hostile to him.

Dr Julian Lewis, Conservative Research Department, 22 Smith Square, London SW1P 3HH.

REGARDING your correspondence over Cezanne's supposed ethnic background. In fact, the French word *Creole* means a person of white race born in colonies, such as Les Antilles, La Reunion, La Guadeloupe, L'ile Maurice, etc. When Ambrose Volland mentioned that Cezanne's mother was from distant Creole origin he was using the word in the French context. R.J. Claudiou-Baker, Albertine Cottage, Deal, Kent CT14 0BY.

DAN Glaston (The Theme Machine, February 17) quoted Michael Winner as saying "If they open a theme park based on Ealing Studios they'll go broke. Like the studio. Sorry to disappoint — despite the receivers being called in, Ealing Studios has survived and is currently flourishing. Simon Mallin, Business Manager, NFTS Ealing Studios, London W5 5EP.

Mediation à la mode

YOUR leader (Children's Rights, February 23) introduces a welcome note of sanity into the debate on divorce law reform. We have effectively had a no-fault divorce law for almost 30 years, wrapped in enough humberg to bring the law into disrepute. Lord MacKay is right to seek to restore integrity to the legal process and his critics are wrong in failing to recognise that this will actually make divorce rather harder to get than at present.

However, I fail to understand why your scepticism does not extend to the claims made on behalf of mediation. There is no worthwhile independent scientific evidence to support your assertions that "bitterness, hostility and recrimination" would all be reduced if the process were mediator-led.

There is very good evidence that mediation does not give the parties any more say in their own future than the legal system does at present, that it pays no more attention to the voices of children and that it may put women at a greater disadvantage.

The real scandal of the present proposals is their dismissal of the, generally constructive, part that lawyers have played over many years in favour of the unproven and untested claims of a new group of would-be professionals whose only virtue seems to be that their virtues are unknown.

Robert Dingwall, Professor of Social Studies, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD.

and availability of information to children about the divorce process. The evidence is that many parents are unable to give reliable information to their children because of their own distress and guilt.

Secondly, there must be more ways in which children can make known their need to be heard. We have supported the idea of a children's rights officer at each family court care centre, but there also needs to be an investment in other services for children, such as counselling facilities. The training of health visitors, playgroup staff, teachers etc needs to encourage help for children in ways that are not stigmatising.

Thirdly, there needs to be research into the circumstances in which the current representation at court of children's wishes and feelings by family court welfare officers should be strengthened by, for example separate legal representation. David Skidmore, Secretary, Family Court Welfare Committee.

Assistant Chief Officers of Probation, 1 Printing House Street, Birmingham B4 6DE.

THE Government does not, as you state, currently spend £2 million on mediation. The sum you refer to is probably the grant-in-aid currently paid to organisations like One Plus One, which provide marriage support services. Your confusion is a common one; there is great uncertainty about the distinctions between marriage support services and mediation.

Mediation can assist couples, who are considering separation or divorce, to reduce conflict between them and the Lord Chancellor's proposals rightly propose to fund this service. But let's not forget that this is the last resort. The best way to help children is to reduce the levels of conflict in their parents' relationship at an early stage so that their parents do not break up.

One plus One's research shows that the early years of marriage (often the time when parents are becoming partners) are highly vulnerable to breakdown. Half of the divorces in 1993 were granted to couples who had not made it to their 10th wedding anniversary and the number of divorces granted to couples with children under-five has in-

creased by two-thirds over the last two decades. Many couples turn for support at the first sign of trouble to professionals, such as members of the primary health care team.

Apresnet, for every £3,000 the Government spends picking up the pieces of family breakdown, it spends less than £3 on marriage support services. The Lord Chancellor has introduced a new clause into the bill in order to put such funding on a statutory basis. However, the issue of resources must be addressed if this bill is going to fulfil its aim of saving the saveable marriage. Penny Mansfield, Director, One Plus One, 12 New Burlington St, London W1X 1PF.

SOPHIE RADICE's article (Stuck in the middle, February 23) authoritatively sweeps aside a narrow and eccentric amendment on the child's right of hearing before a judge. What is not so easily dismissed is the right that children have to both understand the reasons for public pressure and to be heard on their views and aspirations, above all, they need their voices to be heard and taken seriously.

Peter Jeffries, Assistant Chief Probation Officer, Family Court Welfare, Inner London Probation Service, 51 Borough High Street, London SE1 1NB.

Letters to the Editor may be faxed on 0171 837 4630 or sent by post to 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER, and by e-mail to letters@guardian.co.uk. We may edit them; shorter ones are more likely to appear.

A conventional view of justice we should take from Europe

THE editorial on the judgment of the European Court in the case of Singh and Husain (The tariff for murder, February 22) mistakenly asserts that the Home Secretary has lost the power to decide on the release of mandatory life sentence prisoners. In fact, this judgment has only led to a change in respect of juveniles serving sentences of Her Majesty's Pleasure, who represent less than one-tenth of the mandatory life sentence population.

The Home Secretary not only holds the power to decide upon the release of the remaining mandatory lifers, but rather chillingly, he has expressly reserved the right to include political considerations as a relevant factor in that decision.

Against this background, it is only proper for the length of sentences and release from prison, to be decided upon by the judiciary rather than a politician. This is not, however, a panacea for the problems that beset the life sentence system. It should be remembered that judicial decisions are not immune from public pressure and it is perhaps only the extremities of the present Home Secretary that makes judges seem an attractive alternative.

The root of the problem lies in the fact that the only sen-

ences that can be imposed following a murder conviction is a mandatory life sentence. This country is unique in classifying all crimes of murder as being identical in nature, a premise that is difficult to reconcile with the reality of such offences. Until a more enlightened approach to this whole area of law is adopted, there is little prospect for meaningful reform of the system.

Simon Craighton, Solicitor, Prisoners' Advice Service, 97 Chilton Street, London NW1 1BU.

WHAT remains a mystery is the Government's reasons for not incorporating the European Convention into domestic law. On my calculation, some 60 cases against the UK have been heard in the European Court over the last 30 years and the court has found a violation of human rights in 38 of these cases. Surely, with this record, the Government should take the advice of the chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee, Sir Ivan Lawrence QC and Conservative MP, and repatriate the convention. John Wadham, Director, Liberty, 21 Tavard Street, London SE1 4LA.

A Country Diary

MACHYNLETH. All the way from Strumble Head in the south to the end of the Llyn peninsula in the north, Cardigan Bay looked wonderful on Wednesday morning when the gods blew us a few hours of idyllic calm and sunshine. Yet, only a few miles away, a tanker was in distress and there was talk of vast oil spillages, threatening the offshore islands of Skokholm and Skomer. Forty miles across the bay I could see Bardsey, an island I hope to get to this summer. Bardsey was celebrated throughout the Middle Ages as a place of pilgrimage, and so it still is for some visitors. But, for all who go there, it is a place of infinite peace and beauty, insulated from most of the world's troubles (though not from all slicks). Life on Bardsey is simple and, in some ways, nearly as primitive as it was for its remote of centuries ago. But if you would like to stay on this very livable island

and are willing to cater for yourself, I recommend that you stay at the bird observatory there. You have no need to be a birdwatcher; in fact you need not look at a bird the whole time. If you possibly can, go in June. Keep birdwatchers prefer to go in the autumn in the hope of seeing rare migrants, but the weather then can be very rough and cold. So June is really the time to get the best out of a visit to this island of the blessed. Then the days are long and, with luck, sunny, the wild flowers are at their best, the Atlantic is smiling in calm perfection and confiding grey seals observe you inquisitively as you walk along the shore.

If you would like to know more, write (with an SAE) to the Hon Bookings Secretary, Mrs Alicia Norman, 46 Maudlin Drive, Teignmouth, Devon, TQ14 8SB.

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مكتبة الصلح

Prince of all the tortured souls

For Pat Conroy, pain pays. He's made his name by writing his dysfunctional Southern family into his best-sellers. But, as he tells JOHN CUNNINGHAM, he's almost banished the ghosts. Photograph: DAVID SILLITOE

WHEN Pat Conroy brings out a new novel, members of his family react bizarrely, jerking and flailing round as though an electric current was passing through them. Conroy has the habit of giving his clan of six brothers and sisters, and especially his dad, exact treatment in his big family-busting books.

His mother read extracts from *The Great Santini* to the judge when she was getting a divorce as evidence of her husband's cruelty — a wife-beating, child-abusing character in the best-seller is based on Colonel Don Conroy. When *The Prince of Tides* appeared, Pat's sister Carol — a poet on whom the mentally-ill poet Savannah is based in the book — cut him dead.

You can sympathise with his mother. Pats, a minor Southern matriarch. On her deathbed, as Conroy recalls, she said "Son, I find it hard to relax while I'm dying, knowing you're going to write down every damn word I say." Conroy insists she was joking, but sure enough, 12 years on, the lingering, anguished death from cancer of the mother of his latest hero, Jack McCall, spans his new novel, *Beach Music*. Though it takes in the Holocaust and the Vietnam War as they affect a later generation of players, it's really about a family in South Carolina, the best-possible home some which Conroy wears like a nicotine patch in reverse — feeding rather than breaking his addiction to the South.

Indeed, Charleston is for him more of a character than a moody presence, a place where the material order of the world is Delbert look as common as the phone book. By comparison, the membership of Fall Mall seems as exclusive as a bus queue. And the locals have a sense of decorum that makes Barbara Carrand appear as refined as Ruby Wax.

There is some fun upstaging young men of impeccable sexuality ("Show me a product of a military school and I will show you a man who can beat off without moving a muscle, without rustling a sheet" says the narrator in *The Lords of Discipline*), add some women to die for and, wrapped in a lyrical prose which invokes the natural life of the coast and adjacent lowlands, you have a typical Conroy package.

Then the flaws begin to appear, in fiction as in life. Several of the Conroy clan work in hospitals. His young schizophrenic, committed suicide in 1994, and while Pat has no wish to wear a white coat, he is the guy who applies the literary electrodes to his kin, blaming his military hero father for the siblings' childhood grief if not for their later dysfunction. Pat, at 50, is a big

rolly-polly guy, a good ol' boy with a tortured soul. And he's a one off: blubbing away about men's emotions, without any of John Updike's detachment, and certainly without Robert Bly's invented male rituals. Some literary critics, Conroy says, are uneasy about the way he deals with men's emotions in his novels. It's water off his back; after all, a Vanity Fair profile said recently that he had managed to pour out his heart "without losing a tincture of his masculinity."

Home — if that is the right word, since the family moved more than 20 times in Pat's first 18 years — was where the writ of the parade ground also ran.

I tell you Dad was tough. He was the toughest father I ever saw, ever heard about. He'd start hitting you just after you were a baby. All you had to do to get in his target range was to walk. If you cried, he'd hit you in the face. Dad was 6ft 3in, 330 pounds, the strongest Marine I ever saw. There was a reign of terror in his house. The soft father was an unknown figure in my life.

Pain clearly pays. American readers go for his novels in a big way — 700,000 copies sold in the US of the latest, *Beach Music*, just out here (Doubleday, £16.99) in which — a great crux in any Conroy trauma — sons are cast out by fathers with far more fury than Adam and Eve's exile from Eden.

So we have tumbling General Elliott, calling his son a limp-wristed faggot (though actually he's a sensitive priest, not gay at all). As rages go, and they've been going on for 20 years in his novels, Conroy says the General nitches up a nine on the Richter scale. But he claims as a writer, he's maligned Elliott, not the clue in the General's tirade against the Roman Catholic church. "Vatican II, that's when the Church went wrong. That fat pope who couldn't do a chin-up if his life depended on it."

Certainly, the fictional fathers in his novels gesture towards their sons, but no full-scale reconciliations. And Conroy says his father sometimes comes along with him to book-signing sessions, often to point out to readers the gaps between fact and fiction.

But what does he do wrong? "Generally in my novels, they fail to mirror the father. Also I think there's rage at the vicarious frontality of taking their father's place. And they're always the ones who're loved by the wife, by the mother. And it's the softness (in the sons) that the mother loves, the father can't stand."

That was so in his own case. His father, a Marine fighter pilot, sneered when he took up typing because he wanted to be a novelist — "that's for sissies" — but in *Beach Music*, the narrator, from childhood onward, is disturbingly aware of his mother's sexuality.

Bit of the old Oedipus Complex in his own life? "Well, I had the prettiest mother I ever saw. She was a doll." "Bit in love with her yourself?" "I think so." "More than a bit?" "You know, but like I wanted to sleep with her but I think... thought... this caused a great deal of rage in my father, but I ended up loving things she was fond of... poetry, literature. There was a war for the souls of all my brothers and sisters between my mom and dad." "Given all this, it's surprising New Man doesn't make much of an appearance in his novels." "You know any form of defecation is bound to get you in trouble. Automatically, I'm a product of my age. I grew up in the American South. The civil rights movement came roaring round the corner in front of a white southern male. You know, being raised in a south-



Pat Conroy's a one-off... blubbing about men's emotions, without John Updike's detachment or Robert Bly's male rituals

ern family I was classed as racist. I worked through that. Just as I was doing great, the Vietnam war comes flying round the corner, there I was in the most conservative all-white colleges in the country, preparing for this awful war. I demonstrated against that war before it was over. Then I was thinking 'Live a fairly liberal free-thinking life' when the women's movement came be-bopping round the barricades. And once again I found myself a white southern male, the enemy for the third time. So my life was a process of adjustment." "Fair enough, but is he an Iron Jock or an Iron John?" "Are those the guys who beat drums in the forest and tight five and dance round?" "They're silly really. They have tried to draw me into that, I'm not interested."

Why not. It's not much different from boot camp? "Yes, I went through that. I

just really don't need to howl at the moon round a campfire. You know, the movement I believed in was the women's movement. It had goals, and I had five daughters... that seemed to have a real purpose. I found, behind the men's movement, a secret unacknowledged hatred of women; that I didn't want to participate in. It all started as a denigration of the women's movement. One thing I don't worry about is white guys feeling a loss of power. When I talked to these guys, usually at the bottom of it was rage with women, the feeling they were short-changed, that something was lost.

So you won't write about it? "There'll be seven or eight books about the men's movement, you know when something starts in the United States, that's how it is. If I wrote about it, I might make fun of it." "What he might write next is, he says, a portrait of an American marriage. He recently divorced his second wife and seems unsure or unwilling to say what went wrong, beyond incompatibility. It might be some time before he manages to produce that because, in spite of the dismissive way he swings his shoulders when an obstacle comes up, trauma takes its toll: there was a 10-year gap between *Prince of Tides* and his new book. Four of his brothers and sisters have attempted suicide (excluding Tom Conroy) and the writing of *Beach Music* was interrupted by what he calls a couple of "nervous breakdowns."

Nolan was a step too far

PETER THURNHAM explains the reasons behind his decision last week to resign the Tory Whip

WHEN I resigned the Conservative whip on Thursday it was because I have had a variety of concerns. One was the Nolan report. I was dismayed that the Prime Minister, who set up the Nolan committee because of concerns about standards in public life, started to backtrack quickly after pressure from backbenchers, especially over the disclosure of earnings.

I was deeply unhappy further than it needed to go on this. And now there is Scott. Conservative spokesmen did their best to rubbish the Scott report before it had even been published. It is now clear it was an absolute can of worms.

The more I read the Scott report, the more appalled I am. The Government is obviously minded not to take any action over Scott further than it needs to; and Monday's motion is a technical one, which they'll try to wriggle round. The Ulster Unionists, from what I am hearing, will abstain.

But the Government needs to ensure that sufficient action is now taken so that there is far less chance of such a debacle in the future, and action must be taken to follow up Sir Richard Scott's recommendations. It has clearly accepted quite a few: Ian Lang has said it will follow up half the recommendations, and give active consideration to the other half; it will be interesting to see how this emerges in the debate.

In the old days, ministers resigned when civil servants made mistakes. The air was taken to clear, and maybe a year later they were ready to be called back in to government. But now we're three years down the road from the debacle: then there was a 10-year gap between *Prince of Tides* and his new book. Four of his brothers and sisters have attempted suicide (excluding Tom Conroy) and the writing of *Beach Music* was interrupted by what he calls a couple of "nervous breakdowns."

Fashions engage him — "I'm passionate about everything I write." Fashions do not affect his work. "New South writing?" he queries "No I've not heard of that. I don't think there's a school." He's quite happy walking the family demons.

knew what Matrix Churchill was doing, yet it did not act at the time, and the Government did nothing. When Customs decided to bring a prosecution, it "forgot" it had had this material. Yet if Customs and Excise officials had these intelligence reports, the Government must have known that lathes from Britain were being used for making Iraqi munitions.

What concerns me most is the Matrix Churchill trial: I'm very worried that it ever happened. Sir Nicholas Lyell now says he took the decision that it was better at the time to stand back and let the judge sort out the issue; but that's too convenient, isn't it? Scott evidently took a different view to Lyell. At the collapse of the trial, an intelligence witness said the defendants had been very brave men when they went into the dock. So why did the trial take place?

But the report makes many people feel that Alan Clark was the villain of the piece: that he seemed to be giving the nod and wink to machine-tool manufacturers. The report shows that Clark was interviewed by the Prime Minister about this, and afterwards Sir Robin Butler sent him a note of the meeting — which Clark amended so as to strengthen his claim of ignorance. That paper was certainly available later in Sir Robin's office, and I think in the office of Sir Brian Urwin, chairman of Customs. So why was it not acted upon? The report is full of such bungling.

I can see there were initially concerns to protect a company providing employment in the Midlands — but with hindsight it is clear we should not have had any dealings with Saddam. Once the trial came to court, I cannot see any benefits that might have been traded off. Three men were put in the dock with the whole weight of government evidence against them. In 1986 I put down a foreign affairs question in the House on our arms exports. It was answered by Tim Renton, who said we were applying the arms-export guidelines strictly. There was no indication of any relaxation in these guidelines. At the time of the trial we were all very confused.

The difficulty is that Scott never prepared a summary, so it has not been easy for Ministers to take a quick overview. It deliberately lacks soundbites. Its length, and its failure to cover all the issues, has ensured that not everyone has been able to read it all, or even the strength to carry all five volumes around.

I hope more Ministers will read further into the report over the weekend. The more they read, the more critical they will be of the Government.

Loft dwellers come down to earth

While Terence Conran is addicted to loft-living, SALLY WEALE talks to the city types who are kicking the habit

SO, Sir Terence Conran is singing the praises of living in the wide, white, open spaces of lofts. Aloof — and aloft — in his eyrie in Butler's Wharf by Tower Bridge, he surveys the fact that has swept London and other tired cities for inhabiting open spaces carved out of spent industrial buildings. And surprise, surprise, he loves what he sees. There must be more to life than the traditional forms of housing, he pleads, complaining that most of the homes we inhabit conform to an "antiquated mode of living."

how they pitch their appeal. The pictures show rooms the size of bungalows with double-height ceilings, sweeping staircases and minimalist-style decor. The uncluttered whiteness of it all is breath-taking. But where's the washing drying on the radiators? Where's the mangle for all those knickerknacks?



Height of sophistication... Peggy Prendeville in her east London loft. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

Artist Martin Richman, 46, and his wife Lisa, lived for five years in a loft in the Spratt's Dog Biscuit warehouse in Poplar, east London. They had 2,000 sq ft of space and ceilings 16 feet high. It was "thrilling," says Richman. But as their children, Mimi, now aged 11, and seven-year-old Harry grew up, it became less and less practical. There was no garden, the environment was industrial and the service charges were almost prohibitively expensive.

"I would not want to decry the notion of lofts," says Richman. "Living in a large, open, high-ceilinged space is a glorious and wonderful thing. But with just a thin partition wall dividing the bedroom from the living room, there was no privacy."

loft-living again — it's an ideal lifestyle for a single person or young couple, he says. But he thinks the whole concept has become a bit over-hyped. "All that stuff about 'Big Apple, New York-style living'. It's become a marketing cliché and like any other marketing cliché you'd better take it with a pinch of salt. There are an awful lot of shoddy and not particularly desirable spaces that are sold under the banner of loft-living."

and makes a living out of designing other loft spaces, but admits it's not for everyone. "I don't think much of the population would want to live in a place like this."

"The British character is to be all sort of cosy and comfortable. I've had people come round and say 'I couldn't bear being in a house without a fireplace'. It does lack the cosiness of all the things a house can give you. You've got to be prepared for an uncluttered, more minimalist approach to your interior."

Another drawback is that however beautiful it might be inside, outside it's a nightmare. Inevitably, most of the former warehouses and factories now under conversion are located in the murky industrial wastelands of our big cities. "They do tend to be in grotty areas," concedes Prendeville, who insists nevertheless that the interior of her loft, with its space and light, more than makes up for the neighbourhood.

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Jeffrey Quill

Putting the fire into the Spitfire

In 1936 Jeffrey Quill, who has died aged 53, became the second man to fly the Vickers-Supermarine Spitfire...

But on March 5 1936, Quill flew Summers to Eastleigh, where Mutt made the encouraging maiden flight of the fighter...

Quill continued to demonstrate the Spitfire's capabilities at airshows and made his last Spitfire flight in 1966...



MK I of a masterpiece... Jeffrey Quill and Spitfire in 1939

development I was sent to Supermarine as Jeffrey Quill's assistant. We both lived at Bursledon on the Hamble River...

"I meant that problems had to be solved, more or less regardless of expense and of human effort."

Jeffrey Quill was a great man to work for and every body liked him. Never too busy to spare a word of encouragement or advice...

I K Dairo

Music for a new nation

I K DAIRO, who has died aged 55, was one of the founding fathers of the Nigerian music scene...



Dairo: slick lyrics VAL WILMER

For more than 30 years he was the king of juju, the Yoruba urban style that originated in the twenties in the palm-wine bars around Lagos...



On top of the world... Schoen and Franz Beckenbauer celebrate West Germany's 1974 World Cup win

Helmut Schoen

Football maestro in a flat cap

HELMUT Schoen, who has died aged 50, gave West Germany a standing in world football it has never lost. During his 14 years as national manager...

German side bearing early signs of the Total Football that was to follow reached the semi-finals before going out to Italy in a seven-goal extravaganza.

Schoen was a tall, courteous figure on whose head was perched his trademark, an inconspicuous flat cap. A shrewd brain was operating beneath it as Sir Alf Ramsey discovered when Schoen outwitted him over substitutes when West Germany overcame a two-goal deficit to beat England in Leon in the 1970 quarter-final.

Schoen's admirers thought he should have retired after the 1974 World Cup triumph. Two years later West Germany lost the European Championship final to Czechoslovakia in a penalty shoot-out.

Weekend Birthdays

Greetings Lord Peter Melchett (far right), north Norfolk farmer and gentle man of the environment movement.

great foresight you gave up a promising career as a Labour peer to join the eco-movement and here you are at 48, one of the first pillars of Britain's alternative establishment...

had a higher profile than with the Brent Spar but then, in one of Greenpeace's finest hours, someone went and stuck a sea mine on the wrong hole of the North Sea oil platform...

Today's other birthdays: Rt Rev Jonathan Bailey, Bishop of Dunwich, 56; Brian Close, former England cricket captain, 55; Richard Hamilton, pop-art painter, 74; Paul Jones, actor and singer, 45; David Langdon, cartoonist and illustrator, 82; Denis Law, footballer, 56; Michel Legrand, composer and conductor, 65; Bernard Marsden, actress, 77; Peter Owen, publisher, 82; Alain Prost, motor racing champion, 41; Michael Radford, film director, 50; Derek Randall, cricketer, 45; The Rev Kathleen Richardson, Methodist minister, Moderator, Free Church Federal Council, 58; Dennis Waterman, actor, 48.

Tomorrow's birthdays: Elkie Brooks, singer, 51; Tom Courtenay, actor, 55; Lord Crickhowell, chairman, National Rivers Authority, 62; Farokh Engineer, cricketer, 58; George Harrison, filmmaker, singer, former Beatle, 53; Harvey McGregor QC, warden, New College, Oxford, 70; Robert Newton, brewer, 62; Sir David Puttnam, film producer, 55; Lt-Col John Stephenson, former secretary, International Cricket Council, 65; Prof Stewart Sutherland, principal, Edinburgh University, 55; Marshall of the RAF Sir Keith Williamson, former Chief of Air Staff, 68.



Lord Melchett... 48 today

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Face to Faith

Lost in these trivial pursuits

Medicine Bunting THERE'S a captivating advert currently running on television. Stylish in grainy black and white, short snatches of film of huge drama: a baby being born and his father falls over in a dead faint...

blazed this trail, hijacking experiences of huge depth and significance and using them to sell knitwear. So we had a billboard-size poster of a bloody, brand new baby still with umbilical cord uncut...

and talk on the telephone as dozens of people die, make love, or suffer horrors and unimaginable sorrows in front of our glassy eyes. What previous age could know so intimately all the ways human beings can die or have sex?

sacred in life. We seem to manage very well without them, or suffer horrors and unimaginable sorrows in front of our glassy eyes. What previous age could know so intimately all the ways human beings can die or have sex?

places it on a different level from our daily mundane preoccupations. For births and marriages, we scrape by, naming ceremonies, and the time-honoured recipe of flowers, bridesmaids and champagne usually leave most people satisfied.

of how it debases us and so ill prepares us for experiences which are inescapable. The anonymity of the cemetery, the minister, the hollowness of the service. When we need ritual so badly to channel and express intense, overpowering emotion, there is only alienation to compound the grief. Our usual responses of irreverence and scepticism are over whelmed,

but we have no alternative to fall back on. We have no understanding of how to approach the sacredness of this particular moment in time over another. Each of us ends up painfully learning - or not - for ourselves.

Medeleine Bunting is the Guardian's religious affairs editor

Doonesbury



BY GARRY TRUDEAU

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

A night in with a fine wine

Television

Adam Sweeting

IT ISN'T quite clear whether this week's Brit Awards were triumphant or catastrophic, though the way all the stropy and controversial bits were cravenly censored from Tuesday's TV broadcast suggests that the organisers feared that several of our leading pop personalities had brought the game into disrepute.

Paul Weller has managed to embody the widespread ambivalence about the Brits in particular and going-collecting in general by never quite declining an award, but not quite managing to turn up to collect one either. Last year, he huffily refused to set foot on the premises to grab his Best Male Artist figure. This year, he appeared only on videotape, in which he accepted the honour with typical studied incoherence.

Perhaps his real reward was in tonight's Later Presents Paul Weller In Concert (BBC2), although surely host Jools Holland could have devised a fresher simile than "I'd man who, like a fine wine, has improved with age". We must be grateful that Paul has abandoned mewling soft soul and fake funk and rediscovered the electric guitar. He plays it with fire and swagger, and every now and again forgets himself completely and indulges in bouts of rampant guitar-heroism. All he needs now is a few songs you can recognise, like the ones he used to write in The Jam. Currently, our Best Male Artist sounds like a time-travelling fusion of Bad Company, Traffic and Blind Faith, which tells you plenty about the State of Pop.

Cybill Shepherd would turn up for an award even if both legs were in traction and she was immured in an iron lung. Cybill's career has become a slightly desperate struggle to convince the world that she can act, that she's breathtakingly beautiful, and that she's funny. For proof that she scores C-minus on all counts, take a look at Cybill (C4).

Laugh? I would have watched the Mark Thomas Comedy Product instead, but preview tapes were "unavailable" (fascinating subtext here about the way TV companies can manipulate what's reviewable, but we don't have time for that now). Actually, Cybill did have a few chortle-some one-liners, mostly thanks to her friend Marianne, but the really striking thing about the show is its fanatical self-centredness. This is a programme about the Holly wood elite and Cybill's imagined place in it. Much of the script comprised jokes in which Cybill pretended to be self-deprecating about her obstacle-filled life, but really it was a protracted whinge about how singletons in London are tough. Only in California.

Compare and contrast with The Fast Show (BBC2), which is exactly what it says. It's fuelled by sheer pace, with scenes flying so rapidly it becomes irrelevant whether you like it, loathe it or can't understand a word. Rowley Birkin QC is a cartoon establishment geriatric, steeped in whisky and oozing gibberish, while Big Show is both a parody and an exact copy of a Greek/Islam/Spanish TV show. Cholest sketch was "Jazz Club", an in-concert TV show of excruciating hipness featuring the Donald Strong Jazz Tendency playing the classic. In a "Turquoise Mood. Like a fine wine, Donald had improved with age."



The Spellbound exhibition features film-makers as artists and artists as film-makers. Does it work? No, says art critic ADRIAN SEARLE. Yes, says film critic JONATHAN ROMNEY

Popcorn, Britpop and pop art

SPELLBOUND attempts to make sense of the relationship between art and film in the latter part of the 20th century. It is a strange affair. With its roll-call of illustrious British-based film-makers and an unlikely group of well-known British artists, the show mixes popular appeal and serious intentions, entertainment and high culture. There are film-making artists and artists as film-makers, auteurs and directors whose hubris makes them think they can play at the avant-garde. Sir Eduardo Paolozzi has merely filled a gallery with the junk from his studio, with a whole lot more borrowed from a film-prop hire company. There are piles of plaster-cast offcuts from his sculptures, a desultory rack of costumes and a rag-bag of the sculptor's collected ephemera. The robot woman from Lang's Metropolis: books of knitting patterns — all sitting on the skewed shelves of some knock-up storage racks.

Paolozzi calls this lazy nonsense an indecipherable film, but really it is a monument to Paolozzi himself, and even includes a maquette of the artist's sculpture for the British Library.

Both Paolozzi's lumber room and Peter Greenaway's huge installation function primarily as lists of props, locations, actors and actresses, of references and filmic quotes. Greenaway sees himself as an artist and a writer, and the international art circuit have, as much as anything else, been shopping trips for artistic ideas. Live actors sit waiting in glass booths (shades of Bacon's professionalis trapped in their space-frames, and of Tilda Swinton in her cabinet at the Serpentine last year) while around them thunder crashes and lights flash.

There are tables laden with the impedimenta of imaginary filmic scenes, at the breakfast table, in the suicide room and at the abattoir — and an ever-growing pile of daily papers.

A pig's head sits in a galvanic bucket, there are rubber gloves, a white latex glove, a bottle of brush, a bucket of the neutral blue and... do, I can't go on. The installation artist Robert Wilson does this kind of thing much, much better. Paolozzi and Greenaway hide



Genre benders: J. Boyd Webb's popcorn-inspired Asteroid And Kidney Stone (top) is cheaply comic but unexpectedly moving. Peter Greenaway's pig's head (above, photograph by David Sillitoe) wins plaudits from the film critic but not from the art critic. Right: a scene from Damien Hirst's existential short film, Hanging Around

Steve McQueen — despite his name — is a young, black British artist whose films are a high-point in the current British Art Show. McQueen's work is both film and art of a very high order. In Stage, a black man (the artist himself) and a white woman perform a silent choreography in space, accompanied by the rhythmic mechanical clatter and whirl of the projector. The black and white film dwells on black and white skin, on the details of bodies, on reflecting masses, on simple but ambiguous gestures. Light sifts through the film, across bodies, walls, and empty, monochromatic spaces. The film fills a wall, and its stark reflection leaks across the gallery's polished floor into the spectator's space. The experience of McQueen's work feels as much like painting or sculpture as film.

One is made aware of the otherness and closeness of the bodies in the film, their virtual presence, their physicality and their opacity. There would be no space at all for film like this in the commercial cinema, and in a sense McQueen's work is an elegy for the kinds of experience commercial cinema has lost. It goes back to the beginning, when the medium was alive, filled with enigma and infinite possibilities.

If only the other exhibits had such resonance. But although some of the set-pieces are explosive and there are fine caucuses, there are too many walk-on parts — like Paula Rego, whose presence seems entirely arbitrary. Somewhere in post-production, the plot got lost.

It may set out to celebrate the affinities between film and art, but mostly Spellbound makes you aware of the irreducible differences between movie and gallery-going. There's the difference between sitting in the dark and watching a film for a set length of time and taking your own time viewing exhibits in the order you choose. And there's the difference between the viewer sitting in silence and the gallery-goer dispensing loud, erudite observations to anyone in earshot.

The artist Boyd Webb points out a still more crucial difference. In art galleries, you never eat popcorn. More reverent cinephiles stand not to either, and so these little explosions of vegetable matter have become the guilty secret of cinema pleasure, and Webb addresses a deep-rooted taboo in making popcorn the central image of his work for Spellbound. His Asteroid And Kidney Stone involves our readiness to succumb to cinematic illusions of grandeur. On a panel the shape of a cinema screen, a membrane is twisted into a figure suggestive of Möbius-strip infinity, and nuggets of popcorn are arranged on it. Our eye transforms it into a galactic tableau à la 2001. It looks like grandiose Kubrick cosmology, but the fact that it's just plain popcorn reminds us how twirly nuts-and-boits the most spectacular movie illusionism can be.

Damien Hirst gives us a conventional cinema space and a conventional film to match. Peter Greenaway provides seats but no film, to evoke a phantom, or rather, "virtual audience. Webb lets us sit down to see ourselves as punters watching punters. His animated film Love Story is the sentimental adventure of a piece of unpopcorn, struggling to sprout shoots before achieving its romantic ecstasy. Cheaply comic but unexpectedly moving, this is as brazen a piece of anthropomorphism as Babe, and a marvellously literal illustration of the power of corn in the world.

Douglas Gordon's standing-only 24 Hour Psycho shows Hitchcock's film to three frames a second, thereby damping any possibility of reading the narrative, which is subsumed by the arctic or nightmarish shifts of the image.

Spellbound is at the Hayward Gallery, London (0171-950 4208) until May 6.

Reviews

POP

The Bluetones

The Garage, Glasgow

THE Bluetones may sneer at being corralled into Britpop's star enclosure, having deliberately laid low for the last Union-jacked year. But tonight's Garage gig is, from start to finish, a musical primer in post-dance English rock 'n' roll. Drums and bass do that basic beat-thing, Roses-Pat Weller thing, allowing the creamy-faced studs to shimmy and bounce in each others' arms. Guitars cut thick, ragged lumps out of a familiar broth of psychedelic chords and visceral distortion. And the singer? Rake-thin, mop-top, kinda shy, does a monkey walk to the mike, occasionally squalls at a blower, throws Evian to the hub-

THEATRE

Skylight

Wyndham's, London

DAVID Hare's Skylight transfers thrillingly from the Cottesloe to Wyndham's. The performances grow to fit the space and the play itself seems more than ever a conflict not just between two raw and angry individuals but between the entrepreneurial values of the eighties and a countervailing self-fulfilling idealism.

Hare's skill lies in interesting you in restaurateur Tom and teacher Kyra, two lovers undergoing a fretful reunion, first as people and then as symbols of the age. The characters develop into something infinitely larger than themselves, and the great second-act confrontation contains writing of a fury and passion unmatched on the London stage.

The performances in Rich-

Reviews

POP

The Bluetones

The Garage, Glasgow

Can you hear me? ... the Bluetones' kinda shy lead singer, Mark Morris

bing bottles. So far, so conformist.

But it needn't be so ordinary for the Bluetones. The new album, Waiting To Fly, whets the appetite for a more gentle, yet not necessarily camp strain of new British pop. Mark Morris's soft and yearning voice taps into the white-rhocolate-sweetness of Squeeze's Glenn Tilbrook or Scritti Politti's Green Gartside, though the lyrics of love are a

Reviews

THEATRE

Skylight

Wyndham's, London

ard Eyre's beautifully paced production are also better than ever. Michael Gambon, as Tom, exudes not only a peacock vanity but also a vast, unbearable, underlying melancholy. And Lia Williams, as Kyra, articulates the frustration of those who do society's dirty work with a spontaneous zeal that makes the nerves tingle. It is a magnificent play that dignifies the West End.

Details: 0171 959 1736
Michael Billington

Reviews

OPERA

Semele

Covent Garden

JOHN Copley's staging of Handel's secular oratorio, Semele, is a trip down memory lane. Created in 1982 when authenticity was synonymous with high camp, the costumes are neo-classical and slightly comic; the sets with assorted pillars, pillows and beds, vaguely suggest Tinto-

Reviews

THEATRE

Skylight

Wyndham's, London

retto. The piece, a wonderful blend of art and moralising by Congreve to which Handel applied sublime musical invention, deserves to be taken more seriously. Here the pantomime atmosphere was more Brian Fitt than Feydeau.

But the singing in the most important roles was superb. Ruth Ann Swenson, making her debut, scored a number of ovations when she reached the party pieces later in the show. She sings with astonishing purity and accuracy and best of all, her vocalising served a real comic instinct.

It was Felicity Palmer, though, who took hold of what had started as a somnolent performance and shook it into life on her first appearance as jealous queen of the gods. Palmer shot off a flurry of vocal fireworks, singing passages with full tilt as if the fate of the world depended on her voice. After the pompous boredom of Peter Rose's Calpurnia, Palmer's ripe humming was needed.

Details: 0171 301 1000
Tom Sutcliffe

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National gilt fees still have the edge

Cashpoints

NATIONAL Savings, the Government's high street savings arm, is increasing the commission it charges on purchases and sales of gilts through the National Savings Stock Register, with effect from March 1.

The commission will be increased to 0.7 per cent from 0.6 per cent on the first £5,000, and 0.375 per cent thereafter on any amount over £5,000. The charge will be a minimum of £12.50 for purchases, up from the existing £5. But National Savings says buying gilts worth £1,000 through its register will still cost only £12.50, compared to the average stockbroker commission of £22.50 on similar deals.

There will be no fixed minimum charge on sales. Anyone selling gilts valued at £250 will pay £1.75 and sales worth £1,000 will cost £7.

THE National & Provincial Building Society has a three-year fixed-rate savings bond paying 6 per cent before tax on minimum deposit of £2,500. Savings of between £10,000 and £24,999 will return 6.25 per cent, and investments of at least £25,000 earns 6.5 per cent gross.

LLOYDS Bank has launched a novel offshore savings account offering investors a chance to punt on the foreign exchange market.

Savers will need at least £10,000 to open its new one-year Offshore Limited Edition Deposit (OLEED) account that links the returns to the exchange rates of sterling against the US dollar.

The actual pay-out will depend on how the dollar-sterling exchange rate moves over the year in relation to three pre-arranged bands starting at 8 cents, 10 cents and 12 cents. The exchange rate will be set on March 1.

So for example, if on the first day the dollar is trading at £1.51 and the exchange rate stays within a range of 8 cents up or down, the account will return 15 per cent.

If it trades outside this range but remains within the 10 cent range, the return is reduced to 11 per cent.

Should the dollar-sterling exchange rate drift apart by more than 12 cents the bank will return the original deposit plus gross interest at 3.60 per cent.

For the next 12 months an average of forecasts from UK institutions suggests that the US dollar will be trading at around £1.50 to £1.54. But remember that the Forex market is a cruel mistress.

BARCLAYS Bank has come up with a way of capitalising on the forthcoming reduction in savings tax. Under the new rules from April 8, all interest which taxpayers receive will have tax deducted at 20 per cent, down from the current 25 per cent.

Barclays customers can defer any interest due on savings accounts until after the new rate takes effect.

THE Share Centre, the no-frills share-dealing service, is offering football fans an opportunity to back their teams by buying club shares at a flat fee. The broker will buy or sell shares worth £1,000 for a commission of £3. Shares covered include Manchester United, Tottenham Hotspur, Millwall and Preston North End.



Market waits to see if Orange shares are upwardly mobile

Terrace Number

THE future's bright, the future's Orange — but will the company's shares turn out to be lemons? This is the question which would-be investors must decide before the company floats on the stock market next week.

Its 600,000 customers should this week have received an invitation to make a minimum £1,000 investment in Orange, which has grown spectacularly since its launch some two years ago. Right now Orange, having wrong-footed its competitors, is seen as the coolest kid on the block. As one City analyst said: "Orange has got a lot of things right. Investors have to decide whether it will continue with such an impressive performance."

Logic would suggest there is only one way for the mobile phone market to move and that is up, given that fewer than 10 per cent of the UK population has a mobile, compared with around 55 per cent in many other industrialised countries. But a report published this week warned that the four giant mobile phone operators will see their profits growth severely limited over the next decade.

10 million by the year 2006, a price war between the four brands, Vodafone, Cellnet, Mercury One-2-One and Orange, will push their combined revenues up by only 10 per cent over the same period.

The chief irony is that Orange looks set to become a victim of its own success. Its customer-focused, streamlined charging structure has provided its competitors with a blueprint.

Though mobile phone revenues will peak around the turn of the century, from then on profits will fall as companies compete for personal subscribers. A key factor will be who secures the most customers for the more profitable modern digital services and successfully persuades customers of the older analogue services to migrate.

While Orange and Mercury One-2-One only operate digital networks, market leaders Vodafone and Cellnet have both digital and analogue. Vodafone has already seen revenues per subscriber fall from £740 in 1993 to £472 in 1995 as it increasingly acquired cost-conscious personal subscribers.

Orange shares are unlikely to pay any dividends until 2005 and the company is not due to break into profit before 1998. The shares are therefore only suitable for investors looking for long-term capital growth. Even then, investors are being asked to invest in a com-

What you can expect to pay

Table with columns: Monthly fee, Commission, Free calls, Peak, Off peak. Rows include Vodafone, Cellnet, Orange, Mercury, etc.

pany which is losing money, and for which there will be no forecasts in the prospectus from the company about future profits. Investors will have to rely for valuations on extremely analysts who put Orange's worth at £2.7 billion — although they are by no means all agreed. Pessimistic analysts value the company at nearer £1.8 or £1.9 billion.

And there is cause to be pessimistic. Mobile phone retailer People's Phone last month abandoned its plans to float on the stock market following a downturn in demand. People's Phone marketing director Jane Church explained: "Recently the market hasn't lived up to expectations. Mobile phones are no longer seen as a high-ticket gift item and last Christmas people spent their money on the Internet and play stations."

But those who like a gamble may well take heart at the news, though somewhat erratic, rise in the Vodafone share price, which has more than doubled since its launch in 1991. Although it dipped to below issue price when it bottomed at 96p in 1992, it last year reached a high of 280p — and is now trading around 227p.

Foreign fields where justice withers

Richard Colby

AN ANOMALY caused by the Legal Aid Act may prevent a man who developed throat cancer while working for a Rio Tinto zinc subsidiary from ever having his case considered by the courts.

Edward Connelly, a Scot, emigrated to South Africa in 1973 when he was 22. Eventually he obtained work in Namibia as a foreman at a mine for Rossing Uranium Ltd, which is owned by RTZ.

He returned to Scotland in 1982 and shortly afterwards developed throat cancer. He has had to undergo a laryngectomy, which means he can speak only through his oesophagus, and is unlikely to ever be able to work again. He attributes this to the contact he had with ore dust while in Namibia, the cancer being quite a common condition among the mine workers.

Naturally enough he wanted compensation. Being left virtually penniless, he will not be able to bring the action in Namibia, where legal aid is not available. As RTZ is registered in England, he started proceedings against it in the English High Court for which he obtained legal aid. Rather

than try to resist his claim on its merits, RTZ argued that the action should be tried only in Namibia. There was no real reason for it to raise this argument other than the fact that in the absence of legal aid it would not be possible for Mr

Almost penniless, he will not be able to sue in Namibia where legal aid is not available

Connelly to conduct his claim there at all. The courts are commonly faced with a situation whereby a case could be tried in more than one country: an English person on holiday in Spain runs over a Belgian, say.

In deciding whether or not to accept jurisdiction in such a situation, the English Court will ask whether there is another country where the action can be tried "more suitably for the interests of all parties and the ends of justice".

One might have thought it flew in the face of common sense to say Mr Connelly's case could be most suitably dealt with in Namibia, a country where in reality it would not be conducted at all.

Despite the obvious attractions of this argument, RTZ was able to persuade the Court of Appeal that the legal aid position had to be completely disregarded in deciding where the case should be

dealt with. Section 31 of the Legal Aid Act states that the granting of legal aid shall not, with certain exceptions, "affect the principles on which the discretion of any court is based".

Purely on the basis of where the accident occurred, it did make more sense to deal with

RTZ's action will quite probably leave its former employee to die in destitution

it in Namibia. Despite the unfairness of this, Mr Connelly's lawyers have not sought to appeal to the House of Lords. The law as it stands was probably applied correctly, if inflexibly, by the judges. Instead Mr Connelly's

colleague, Richard Moran of Leigh Day Co, has agreed to represent him here without legal aid. He will act under a "conditional fee agreement", introduced last year, these enable lawyers to take on cases on the understanding they will be paid only if they win.

Mr Connelly's case is a complicated one, and Mr Moran's firm may have to pay expert witnesses out of its own pocket with no guarantee of recouping costs would not normally do.

It is not yet clear whether the courts will accept, now legal aid is no longer a factor, that the matter should be dealt with in England.

RTZ, which is not willing to make a realistic offer to Mr Moran, has indicated it intends to continue doing all it can to stop the courts considering the claim, quite probably leaving its former employee to die in destitution. Richard Colby is a barrister.

Rich to lose their legal aid loopholes

Nick Pandy

THE Government is to tighten the terms of entitlement to legal aid to deter wealthy people from ducking legal costs.

Under new regulations likely to take effect in June, Legal Aid Board officials will be able to scrutinise the assets of claimants' relatives and friends and take property values into account when deciding on legal aid applications.

Until now, some cash-rich people have diverted wealth to other family members to qualify for legal aid. A special investigation unit for complex cases will also be

set up. New measures to curb the entitlement of the well-heeled follow the controversy sparked by legal aid granted to the likes of the Maxwell brothers and the former Guinness chief, Ernest Saunders.

One of the central proposals is to limit to £100,000 the value of a house ignored in the legal aid means test. Where a property is worth more, the assistance will be curbed.

To qualify for assistance claimants must pass a means test and demonstrate that they have a reasonable case. Elsewhere, under plans to streamline the civil justice system being drawn up by Lord Woolf, people suing for compensation may have to pay

extra costs and bonus damages if they insist on going to court. The Law Lord, responsible for devising a simpler, cheaper system, is proposing that litigants come to an out-of-court deal. If the case goes to court and the result shows the out-of-court offer should have been accepted, judges will be able to award costs to the party making the offer.

In a separate move, Columbia Provident Society and the specialist insurance broker Greystoke Legal Services have come up with a private sector legal aid scheme designed to give citizens who do not qualify for legal aid — but do not want to risk their sav-

ings — access to justice. Under the terms of its Law-Assist plan, applicants pay a one-off premium of £250 including VAT, which covers bills to £2,000. For more complex legal wrangles applicants can pay a premium of £1,050, which will allow for legal costs up to £18,000.

The scheme differs from traditional insurance deals because it provides after-the-event cover, where a legal action may be the best way to resolve the situation but funding the court case is a burden.

Anyone interested in taking out the policy should bear in mind that it is a discretionary scheme, which means that — with motor or home insurance — the buyer is obliged to

disclose all material facts of the case accurately. However, Bob Gordon of Greystoke says that it has never turned down a claim.

Greystoke says its case-load shows that 80 per cent of the court cases it is involved with relate to people suffering personal injuries through negligence. Other cases involve industrial injuries, professional negligence and breaches of contract. The society will not take on cases involving matrimonial disputes, debt collection or builders.

Further details from Bob Gordon, Greystoke Legal Services, Greystoke House, 80-86 Westgate Street, London SE11 3AQ.

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THE PEOPLE WITH CAPITAL IDEAS

Insuring your designer specs can prove to be a problem, as NATASHA GRAY reports



Spectacles case... James Morrow's problem was finding cover. PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Those frames and quotes and claims

PRESCRIPTIONS for new reading glasses may tempt some people to treat themselves to fashionable frames. But, as one spectacles wearer found out, it was not the initial cost, which was steep, but the insurance which became the problem.

James Morrow's designer specs cost £384, the most he had ever spent on a pair of glasses, so it was understand-

able that he wanted to get them fully insured. His optician could not offer a policy for loss and the maximum cover under the breakage scheme was £400.

In fact, people would be hard-pushed to find an optician to cover loss and theft, as Mr Morrow discovered when he sought what was on offer. Even retailing opticians offer very little to customers in terms of comprehensive insur-

ance. Big names, including Boots and SpecSavers, will only give a one-year manufacturer's guarantee to cover breakage, and advise customers to get their household contents insurance extended to an all-risks policy, which will cover loss away from the home.

At the time Mr Morrow did not have a contents policy, and he had hoped to insure his glasses separately. His optician told him to contact the Hospital Savings Association, a cash benefits scheme which covers optical claims as well as dental care, chiropody and physiotherapy, plus general medical insurance.

Weekly payments, from £1.45, cover a whole family for all 19 benefits. But for optical claims alone this would pay just £27, much less than the annual premium, and so was not a suitable option.

The FISA scheme's become popular through opticians when the NHS scrapped free eye tests in April 1989. Opticians started to offer eye tests for the same price as those available on the NHS. Dolland and Aitchison, one of Britain's largest opticians, rushed to offer insurance packages as part of the test scheme in an attempt to corner the market. But today it has no insurance policy for specs.

Similarly, David Clulow used to offer an insurance scheme, but says that because of the number of fraudulent claims, insurance companies withdrew the policies.

Jarrett Insurance still offers a separate policy, underwritten by NIG Skandia, covering both contact lenses and glasses. However, the annual premium is 20 per cent of the original cost and there is a ceiling of £250. Insurance for more expensive glasses is negotiable.

claim if the glasses were lost or stolen. But for breakage claims he took the policy offered by his optician, which charges a premium of £10 to £25 depending on the type of lenses and claims to provide cover for two years.

It is worth checking the small print when taking out breakage cover. The lifespan of glasses is about two years, and the policy offered by Mr Morrow's optician only pays claims for damage within the first 18 months, after which the premium is reimbursed to be put towards a new pair. The

will be asked to pay £25 towards the claim but will get a 25 per cent discount off the whole policy. Claims can be made if the glasses do not exceed the £750 single article limit, which is unlikely.

Saga Services, which specialises in the over-50s market, offers a similar all-risks package. Glasses can be covered under the standard home insurance policy where claims for accidental damage and destruction are subject to a £25 excess fee. An additional premium is charged for damage for loss and theft away from the home.

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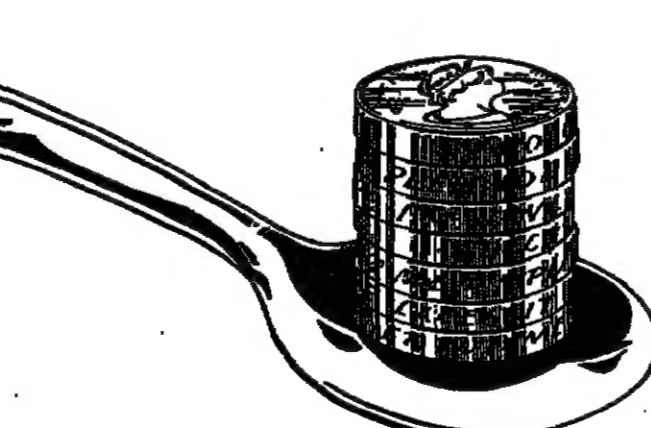
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Insurance through household contents policies is the easiest way to protect expensive new spectacles, and these can be extended to personal effects

option of insurances through household contents policies is the easiest way to protect new specs. The policies can be extended to cover personal belongings under an all-risks category where claims can be made for events outside the home.

Equle Star offers an extra cover option on its Home Star policy which will cover loss and breakage outside of the home. If the claim is above the average, which is between £150-£200, the policyholder

or to charge each time an account is examined.

Lenders have been criticised for introducing post-completion redemption penalties, whereby a lender unilaterally imposes a three-month interest penalty when a loan is redeemed.

Rather than condemning this practice the code says: "Where terms and conditions may be varied, lenders will tell customers how any variations will be notified, and will give customers reasonable notice before any variation takes effect."

Similarly, the code maintains that lenders cannot be held responsible for the majority of advice given, as they claim they do not recommend mortgages. To this end, borrowers will be asked to sign a disclaimer saying they got no advice.

Even where lenders make a recommendation, which must be explained in writing, they have the ultimate get-out in the code which says that "any recommendation will be subject to market conditions at the time". This means customers cannot expect their lender to have any additional foresight of expertise than they themselves possess. It would also absolve them of another mortgage sale — the high-pressure sale of endowment mortgages.

that people favoured low rates over loyalty schemes.

NatWest offers Air Miles to its Visa cardholders and Barclaycard gives away Profile points which can be exchanged for goods from its gift catalogue.

Abbey says that potential cardholders must be existing customers. A spokeswoman said that non-customers could open an Abbey account to obtain a card. Its current account has the lowest authorised overdraft charges on offer from high street banks, at an APR of 9.9.

Credit card usage is on the increase. Figures from the Credit Card Research Group showed spending on plastic cards last month had increased by 16.1 per cent on January 1995. The group said that Christmas shopping had boosted card spending to a new record of £7.9 billion per month in December.

Charles Tomer, Abbey National's retail managing director, said: "Credit cards will continue to grow in popularity, and we have the financial strength to offer a particularly attractive card."

Holders of other cards will have an incentive to use their plastic when NatWest launches a new promotion through its cash machines. The bank is to issue money-off vouchers on the back of receipts.

Mortgage code comes under fire

Teresa Hunter

HOME buyers could be forgiven for concluding that a new mortgage code produced this week amounted to little more than a statement of existing bad practice.

Repossessions continue at roughly 1,000 per week, there are more than 1 million people trapped in negative equity and many of the elderly who bought home income plans live in dread of losing their homes — so improved protection for mortgage borrowers is vital.

Mortgage lenders have successfully persuaded the Government that a code of practice is all that is needed. But the Consumers' Association has called for the Financial Services Act to be extended to cover mortgages, claiming the new code, had "dodged the key issues".

The position of borrowers with arrears, for example, has frequently been aggravated by substantial additional fees which have sent debts spiralling beyond their control.

The new code does not outlaw these onerous burdens on those most at risk of losing their homes — but allows lenders to levy monthly or quarterly fees,

Abbey plays a competing card

Cliff Jones

ABBEY National has launched its first credit card, which will be available to the bank's 10 million customers.

The Visa card has an annual percentage rate of 19.9 on purchases, or 17.9 for cards with debts of more than £1,000. The interest-free period is up to seven weeks.

The Abbey card has a £9.50 annual fee, waived for the first year. The card is free to customers who credit £500 or more to their Abbey National bank account each month.

The APR is around 3 per cent lower than the rates on credit cards offered by rivals such as Barclays and NatWest, who charge an annual fee of at least £10. The interest rate is also lower than on the no-fee card — with a 51-day interest-free period — issued by the National & Provincial Building Society, set to become part of Abbey National.

The bigger high-street banks took a beating last week with the launch of the latest card from Royal Bank of Scotland. RBS Advantia boasted an APR of 15.9 per cent on purchases, with no annual fee.

Abbey said its card was not launched in response to RBS Advantia. However, like the American company Advantia, Abbey said its research told it

that people favoured low rates over loyalty schemes.

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A Big Bang approach with a large number of stocks is dangerous

Capel-Cure Myers

Our members appear to be reasonably happy with existing arrangements

National Association of Pension Funds

We have failed to convince market users of the need for change

NatWest Markets

Notebook

Wall Street sails on regardless



Alex Brummer

IT MIGHT have been thought that with a Democrat in the White House...

Dow Jones has performed so mightily over the past year...

In fact, it is the drive for shareholder value... which has so infuriated Pat Buchanan...

Currently, mutual funds in the US... the equivalent of our unit trusts...

AT PRESENT, and in real terms, the percentage of household wealth held in stocks...

Mutual funds have become the new savings of preference...

The other factor which has driven Wall Street to new peaks...

BUT IT is much more than that. There is evidence that important structural changes have been taking place...

City revolt rocks Exchange

Patrick Donovan and Paul Murphy

THE Stock Exchange faces huge pressure to suspend its plans for restructuring the share market...

sents the biggest market upheaval since Big Bang in 1986. But several of its leading members insisted yesterday...

roducing "order-driven" trading, which is based on dealers posting the size of bargain they wish to deal.

Michael Marks, co-head of global equities at Merrill Lynch, said: "There needs to be an overwhelming demand from the majority of the market participants...

to giving a tacit approval to something that is not required". NatWest Markets said: "We should not move forward with a new structure simply to meet a self-imposed time deadline."

needed, BP said: "Changes are being forced on the markets from three main areas. They are Life, overseas investors and the UK market makers."



Facing the music... Jürgen Schneider arrives under guard at Frankfurt airport after nearly two years on the run with his wife Claudia (above).

Tycoon takes flight to prison — first class, naturally

IAN TRAYNOR sees fugitive couple return to stand trial in Germany

FUGITIVE Jürgen Schneider — bricklayer, business school graduate and estate agent extraordinaire — was behind bars last night after almost two years on the run fleeing charges in Germany's biggest property scandal since the war.

were remanded by a Frankfurt judge pending trial on an expected six charges of fraud and falsifying papers, and abetting fraud, to fund the building boom and property purchases he undertook after German unification in 1990.

The tycoon was traced to Miami last May from where he fought the German authorities' extradition case until last month when he agreed to return. He fled Germany in April 1994 as his huge property bubble burst and Deutsche Bank, the country's biggest commercial bank and his main creditor, pulled the plug.

The Schneiders emerged from the first-class compartment of a Lufthansa jet yesterday after a row over their flight arrangements and who should foot the bill.

pected to open before the end of the year, may see their lawyers trying to turn the case into an indictment of Deutsche and the German banking system.

stituting bankruptcy proceedings. The case could prove a further embarrassment for Deutsche. When the Schneiders fled to America, the bank's chief, Hilmar Kopper, damaged its image by describing as "peanuts" the millions of marks the former estate agents owed to small clients.

Industrial slowdown spreads across Atlantic

Mark Tran in New York and Richard Thomas

F EARS that the UK could follow the US into a period of economic slow-down were fuelled yesterday by evidence of British manufacturers putting investment plans on ice in the face of weakening overseas demand.

factories between October and December was £2,991 million, 9 per cent lower than in the preceding three months. Economists said firms could be mothballing spending on new plant and machinery because of a sharper-than-expected drop in exports.

ment said yesterday — the weakest performance since the recession year of 1991, when the economy shrank by 1 per cent. Jonathan Loynes, UK economist at HSBC Markets, said: "Coming on top of the poor investment figures, the US data look very worrying. Export markets have weakened significantly. The risks to growth are now significantly on the downside."

Chief Secretary to the Treasury, launched an immediate defence of the UK's investment record. "There are a lot of myths about investment. In fact, it is a British success story," he said in a statement.

but increases of 4 per cent for vehicles and 9 per cent for plant and machinery. Separate figures from the CSO showed that factories were only slowly running down their plentiful stocks during the last quarter of 1995.

ment shutdowns as the Clinton administration and congressional Republicans bickered over a balanced-budget plan.

De Beers and Russia cut deal to avert diamond crisis

Dan Atkinson

DIAMOND company De Beers and the Russian government appeared last night to have resolved their differences and averted a worldwide collapse in gemstone prices.

have started a worldwide slide in prices, which are kept as high as they are only because of the De Beers cartel. Owners of diamond jewellery would have found all but the rarest and largest stones diving in value, and the turbulence would have wreaked havoc in poorer diamond-producing nations such as Botswana and Namibia.

Airwaves lure advertising

Lisa Buckingham

COMMERCIAL radio increased its advertising revenues by nearly 23 per cent to £270.3 million last year, accounting for more than 4.2 per cent of the UK's display advertisement spending.

growth in national revenues outstripped the total by 8 per cent. The proportion of national advertising is expected to decline, according to the Henley Centre, which expects commercial radio to be pulling in revenues of almost £350 million by the end of the decade.

Car insurance by phone for AA members

CHR Jones

THE AA last night stepped up competition in the car insurance market by unveiling plans to offer direct policies to its 500,000 members.

Rouse pays \$500m for last assets of Howard Hughes

Mark Tran in New York

THE final bell tolled for the business empire created by Howard Hughes when his heirs yesterday sold the last assets still under the famous Hughes name to Rouse, a large developer of shopping malls, for more than \$500 million (\$265 million).

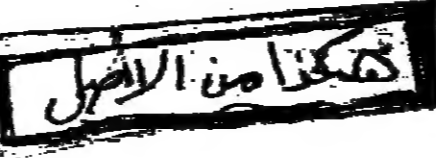
even refused to have his photo taken. When he died in 1976, Hughes was a virtual prisoner of his own making in a Las Vegas hotel room, with a morbid fear of germs and people.

Radio to take the largest share

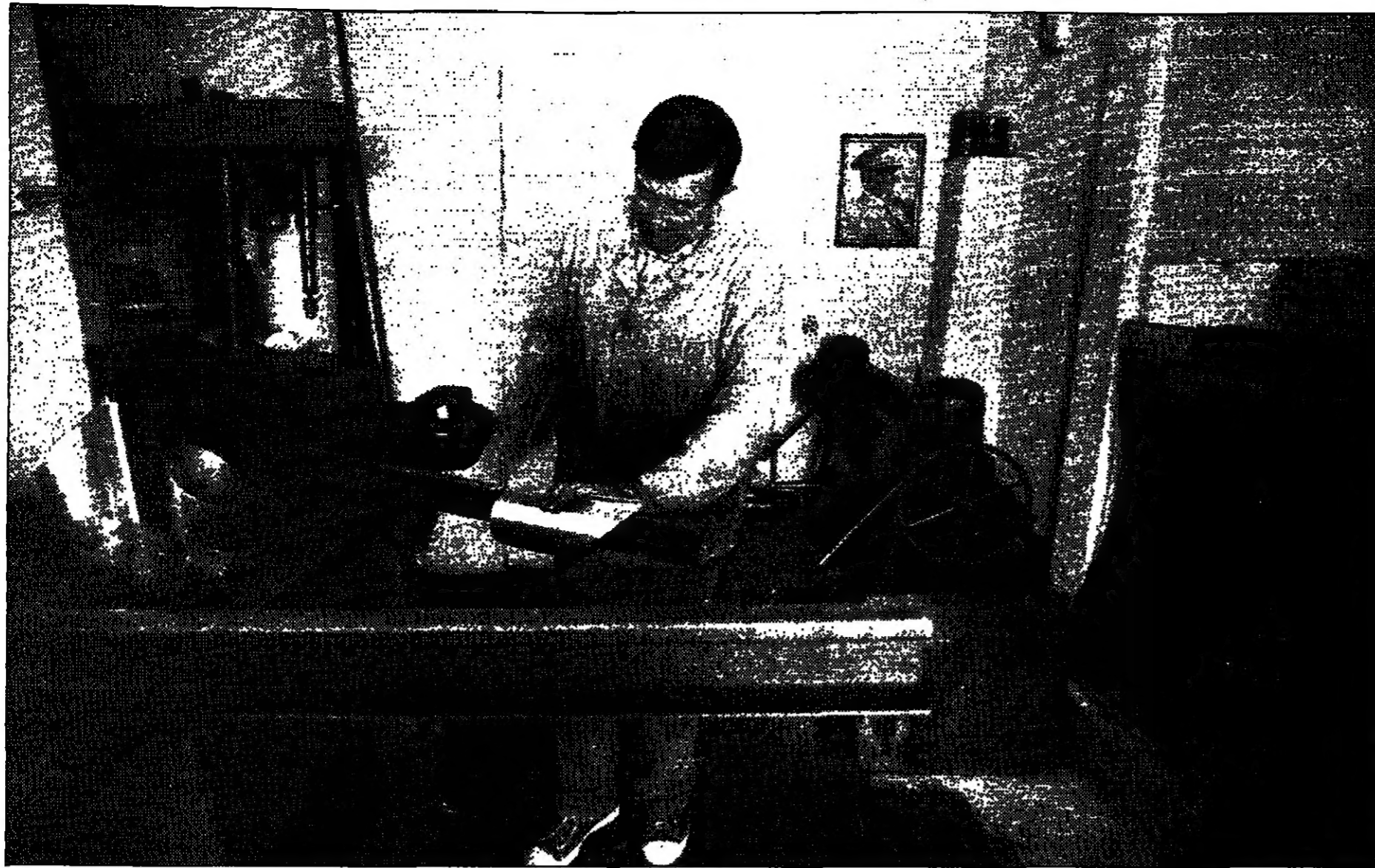
Table with 2 columns: Medium and Revenue. Total advertising: 44, Commercial radio: 93, Television: 54, Cinema: 46, Press: 37, Outdoor: 32.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Table with 4 columns: Country, Rate, Country, Rate. Australia 1.98, France 7.43, Italy 2.370, Singapore 2.13, Austria 15.15, Germany 2.175, Malta 0.54, South Africa 5.74, Belgium 46.50, Greece 367.00, Netherlands 2.45, Spain 182.00, Canada 2.06, Hong Kong 11.72, New Zealand 2.25, Sweden 10.25, Cyprus 0.70, India 59.45, Norway 9.55, Switzerland 1.75, Denmark 8.42, Ireland 0.9550, Portugal 227.00, Turkey 55.85, Finland 6.59, Israel 4.75, Saudi Arabia 5.74, USA 1.5028



PAUL BURDEN on a wartime wheeler-dealer become a role model for reconstruction



After Tito... A metalworker fashions woodburning stoves used for cooking when Sarajevo's electricity and gas were cut off during the civil war

PHOTOGRAPHS: SEAN SMITH

Mr Fixit fills Bosnia's black hole

THE mood is suddenly tense in the Businessmen's Club at the back of Ferhadija, the main artery of Sarajevo's old town. Someone at the other end of the phone has made Aleksa Nuhanovic angry. The backer, who had been invited to finance a DM700,000 (\$313,000) deal, wants a 1 per cent deposit upfront. Five high-decibel minutes later, the would-be backer has become an ex-backer.

has cast a deep sense of gloom over its people. Quite simply, it has become an economic black hole. The physical damage is spine-chilling. According to the International Management Group, the consultants working for the World Bank, the manufacturing economy is working at about 10 per cent of capacity. Meanwhile, the old Yugoslavia no longer exists and faith in the communist system of central planning has collapsed. The government knows there can be no return to the past.

ern market economy. Building a free market economy in Bosnia will be an especially difficult task — not only because of the destruction of the war, but also because of the quirky way that the old Titoist system had built in a high degree of interdependence among all the constituent republics. The reasoning was that economic self-interest would force them all to hang together. It failed in that, but it has also made it more difficult for an independent Bosnia to stand alone.

lems — which is causing the most short-term anxiety. At the moment, thousands of workers in state companies are in limbo. They are on somebody's payroll, but they are neither working nor being paid. The giant Polhem polyurethane plant at Tuzla has produced nothing for four years. Nationally, it still has 800 workers on its books; in practice, most are collecting welfare payments equivalent to DM100 a month or less.



A Bosnian digs for desperately needed coal in the spoilheap of the abandoned steelworks at Zenica

Update Bulgaria's arms industry, which employs some 140,000 directly and double that number indirectly, had sales of £106 million last year, the state news agency BTA reported on Thursday. The lion's share went to Arab countries. Defence officials have estimated that up to 4 per cent of the industry's capacity was enough to cover the needs of the country's 100,000 army.

Paris and Bonn 'are worst for setting trade barriers' Julie Wolf in Brussels EUROPEAN Union countries are undermining the single market in areas from public procurement to recognition of professional qualifications, with Germany and France among the worst offenders, the European Commission said yesterday.

Mark Milner European Business Editor STRICKEN Dutch aircraft maker Fokker expects its future to be decided this week as the Canadian group Bombardier and South Korea's Samsung weigh up possible bids.

Fokker resigned to job cuts Samsung is expected to clarify its position later because it is less advanced in its assessment of the state of Fokker's business. Any bid, however, will almost certainly be for Fokker subsidiaries or assets, not for the shares of the holding company which has debts of more than £1.2 billion.

Twilight of the gods of German management

As more flagship companies run into trouble after diversification, boardroom reputations nosedive, says IAN TRAYNOR

HOW the mighty are falling. As the proudest names in German business are humbled, as the bankruptcies soar, as the queues lengthen, as the balance sheets plunge into the red, questions are being asked about the captains of industry and their performance. The roll-call of blundering within the country's flagship companies is extended by the week: Daimler-Benz, Germany's biggest conglomerate, sustained record losses of DM6 billion (£2.7 billion) last year; AEG, proud manufacturer of kitchen equipment for over a century, has been broken up; Grundig, the TV-maker, posted losses of half a billion marks last year; and this week the country's biggest shipbuilder, Bremer Vulkan, filed for protection from its creditors after a one-billion-mark loss last year.

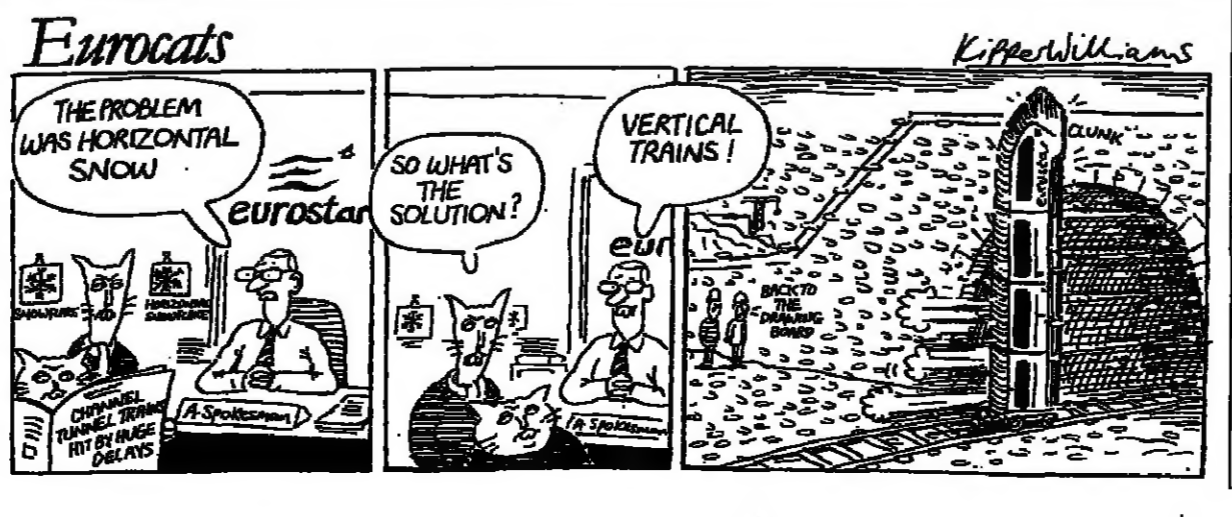
Some of the biggest names have rapidly gone from being worshipped as visionaries to being derided as villains. This week's prize for mismanagement goes to Friedrich Henemann, who ran Vulkan from 1987 until last year, when he received a golden handshake estimated at DM1.4 million. He presided over the company's disastrous expansion and diversification. With 25,000 jobs at stake in the Vulkan empire, the tabloid Bildzeitung asked: "And Are You Keeping Fine, Herr Henemann?"

Worried sceptics force EMU on to electoral agenda

Parties' near unanimity in favour of currency union is finally questioned, reports ADELA GOOCH in Madrid

ATE, but with gusto, Spain has launched a debate on monetary union, revealing the existence of Euroscepticism in a country that had appeared unanimously in favour of European integration. The initial salvo was fired by Miguel Boyer, finance minister in the first Socialist government of Felipe Gonzalez and the man who helped former EU president Jacques Delors draw up the original blueprint for monetary union.

employment of more than 30 per cent, was linked to the German mark in a fixed exchange rate. For the two largest political parties, the debate comes at an embarrassing time, during the election campaign. Neither has seriously questioned monetary union. Both present it as an unquestionable advantage and, with slightly less conviction, insist Spain can meet its Maastricht criteria.



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Finance Guardian

Sell-off raises safety margin fears

CHRIS BARRIE reports from Somerset, where officials try to plan for a 'credible' nuclear accident. Right, GREG PALAST looks at America's private nuclear plants

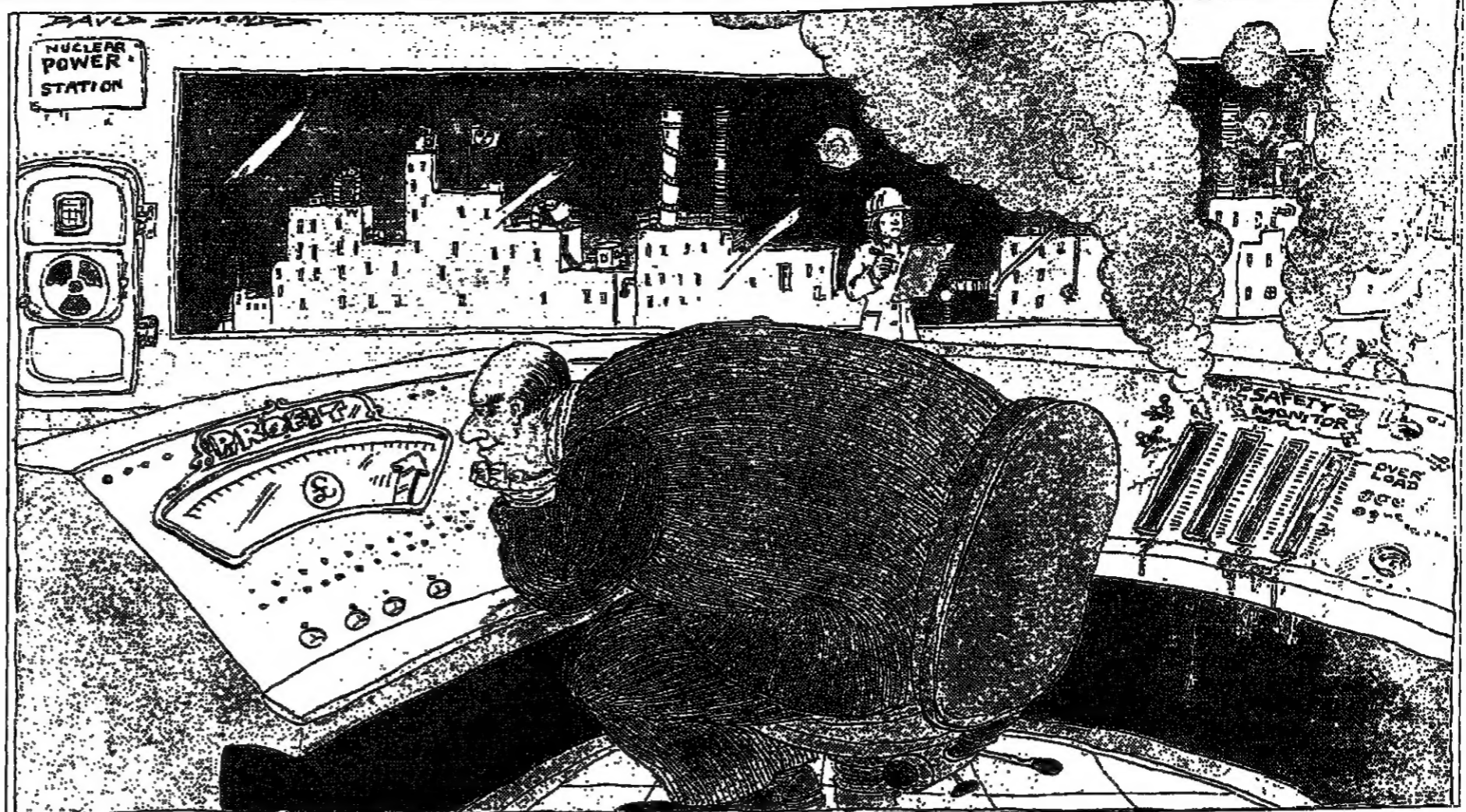
THE MAN from Somerset County Council was explaining why radioactive fallout is so dangerous. "You can't see, feel, smell or hear it. It makes it all the more frightening. Something could be harming you, and you would not know."

Russell Davies knows all about nuclear power. As senior emergency planning officer in Taunton, he is responsible for keeping the county prepared for the unthinkable: a disaster at the nearby Hinkley Point atomic power station. The thought of an atomic meltdown on the Somerset coast may seem as academic as the language in which the industry discusses such a horrifying idea. And Britain has enjoyed a good safety record. But last year the dangers of nuclear power came under the spotlight as the industry geared up for this summer's intended £2.5 billion privatisation. First came a £384,000 fine for Nuclear Electric over an emergency at its Wylfa reactor. Then came a stark warning from Captain Richard Killick, a former director of safety and quality at Scottish Nuclear, that privatisation posed risks. Last Wednesday MPs weighed in with the trade and industry committee report on nuclear privatisation. It accepts that a well-managed company is likely to be both safe and profitable, but MPs called for two specific measures to monitor safety in

British Energy, the company formed to own the eight reactors after privatisation: ● Guarantees that Government safety inspectors would crack down on staff incentives to keep plants running when they should be shut down; ● Formal boardroom representation for safety vested in one executive director. Mr Davies and his boss, Somerset's emergency planning officer Peter Deal, view privatisation with a wary eye. Their first line of defence is

The accident at Wylfa put 'a big question mark' over safety arrangements

the obvious one: no accidents in the first place. Any disruption to Hinkley personnel and safety procedures sets their alarm bells ringing. Yet disruption is a possibility. Hinkley Point has both a Magnox and an AGR reactor on the same site. The AGRs are heading for the private sector while the elderly Magnoxes stay in state hands. So Hinkley is now being split, with staff allocated to either British Energy or Magnox Electric. New contractual arrangements are being made between station staff who used to work together. With only four months to go to the sell-off, the separation is not complete. Mr Deal said his



officials were concerned that, in the long term, staff at the site would split along company lines although some safety procedures required them to act as one. As staff left or retired the network of informal working relationships and friendships would dissolve. Job cuts would also cause unease. Mr Deal said: "We don't know what the private sector ethos will be. He pointed out that the nuclear inspectorate (NII) exists to prevent nuclear staff overriding safety in favour of profit, but nodded when his colleague asked: "But what were the NII up to at Wylfa?" That event, Mr Deal said, put "a big question mark" over safety arrangements.

The judge in the Wylfa case cleared Nuclear Electric of choosing output over safety. And the Government stresses repeatedly that nuclear inspections will remain as tough as ever. But Somerset is ready for a nuclear emergency. Its manual for coping with one is extensive. Its dry officiousness juxtaposes the mundane with the chilling, covering everything from keeping Whitehall informed to the use of mortuaries. The manual lays down who alerts the police and the public, monitors the environment, controls access to the area, and restricts food distribution from the region. It is, in effect, a series of judgments about the likely scale and severity of a disaster. It notes, for instance, that the maximum activity would be emitted as a

Are officials happy with evacuation only for those up to 3.5km downwind? 'Yes and no'

plume, dispersing over distance but depositing traces "at considerable distances from the site". People can be contaminated by inhaling the material, being physically exposed to it, or by eating and drinking contaminated food and water. In an emergency the police would take charge, set up road blocks, and order an evacuation if necessary. The public "could be advised to shelter and take other simple protective measures", such as "go indoors, close all outside doors and windows, switch off any ventilation fans and keep domestic pets indoors". Locals will be told to tune in to broadcasts, leave farm animals, and warned: "Do not harvest fruit and vegetables from the garden until further notice." Evacuation is not rehearsed because, as Mr Davies frankly admitted, the result would be "bloody chaos". It is, as a result, hard to see how quickly the police could move the 800 locals in the immediate vicinity. But whether rehearsal would yield firm lessons is doubtful, he said. To keep them going while the problem is assessed, the local population have been supplied with potassium iodide tablets which are supposed to prevent the thyroid gland accumulating radioactive iodine released into the environment. If necessary, they would be evacuated to the local hospital and, if contaminated, treated in a small room — "used for storing wheelchairs at present" — to the right of the accident department. Evacuees are to be registered and screened at "rest centres" by Somerset Scientific Services and, if contaminated, separated into a "dirty area" for showering. Their clothing is removed for decontamination. The emergency response may be scaled up depending on the size of the disaster. But despite this flexibility and the meticulous planning, there are question marks. At Hinkley it has been assumed that the worst case will require evacuation of people up to 3.5km downwind. Yet environmental monitoring of other issues assumes a much wider area. Water supplies would be monitored over 40 km, the same distance for restrictions on locally produced milk and food. Mr Davies said the 3.5km zone is based on an agreement between the industry and the nuclear inspectorate on the most "credible accident". The council has no say in this assessment. Given that US reactors assume 10- and 50-mile zones are needed for direct exposure to radioactive plumes and ingestion of radioactivity respectively — are Somerset's officials happy that 3.5km is to be used? "Yes and no," said Mr Deal. "They must have proved their point for it to be agreed. If it proves otherwise, they will have to answer for it afterwards." Both officials share the industry's philosophy that the best solution is to avoid a disaster in the first place. But faced with a reactor on the verge of meltdown, the advice is simple. By all means swallow the tablets but, above all, get moving. "You cannot be getting into a state of the way," said Mr Russell.

board in 1995 and is looking for more "opportunities" in Britain. Is Britain prepared for profits-first nuclear operators? The following is a checklist of safety measures that the US government has been forced to adopt in an uphill battle to contain the cost-cutting impulses of nuclear entrepreneurs: ● A nuclear police force. Britain's Nuclear Inspectorate has a staff of 265 to watch 41 reactors. The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission has a staff of more than 3,000 to monitor 109 reactors. Although Americans hate government, we demand this for good reason. Of nuclear executives found liable for fraud, Judge Peter Cochran said: "They lie as they breathe."

● Whistleblower protection. The story of workers terrorised in Texas had a happy ending: Saportis, Rex and Goldstein all won litigation against their bosses under US whistleblower protection laws far tougher than the one still bottled up in Parliament. ● No secrets. When the attorney Robert Eye received a box of documents stolen from private files at the Wolf Creek nuclear plant in Kansas, the plant's corporate owners cried: "Tight Commercial secrets!" But the courts ruled that Mr Eye could keep, even publish, the papers. In the US, every nuclear building plan and working file now belongs to the public, a right denied in Britain.

Britons beware — profit and plutonium don't mix

WHEN the inspector flagged a quality control problem at the South Texas Nuclear Plant, company personnel responded quickly. Standing with the inspector on the high reactor wall, they offered him a choice: "We'll throw you off and you can pick the side." Welcome to the world of nuclear power for profit. Before Britain sells its nuclear plants into private hands, it would be wise to look at experience here in America, where we have long mixed plutonium with profit. Safety costs money. What will a profit-motivated owner do to reduce safety spending? Back to South Texas: with the help of tiny espionage cameras fitted into the ceiling of the workers' locker room, the operators hunted for workers suspected of leaking information to government inspectors about the plant's safety problems. Once discovered, the "disloyal" faced summary dismissal: John Rex, for blowing the whistle on forged safety inspection documents; Thomas Saportis, for exposing security violations; Ron Goldstein, for flagging faked welding records. Why should Britain care if nuclear plants are in faraway Texas intimidate their workers? Because the joint owners of the Texan plant are not so far away. One, Houston Industries, bid for Norweb Electricity; the other, Central and South West Corp, purchased See-

● Nuclear trials. In the US, we now hold long inquiries before a plant may operate. On the Shoreham nuclear inquiry, which ran to 20 million pages of testimony and evidence over 10 years, the state government team uncovered phoney safety reports, cracked generator shafts and more. It prevented a dangerous plant operating, but only after fierce courtroom combat prised damning documents from reluctant executives. ● An evacuation plan. Since the Three Mile Island partial meltdown in 1979, no US plant can operate without a publicly analysed and tested plan to evacuate 10 miles downwind of an accident. Even at 10 miles, 35 per cent of the population would receive a dose of 200 rams, which can kill. Britain requires only a one-kilometre evacuation, though some plants, such as Hinkley Point near Bristol, generously plan escape for those within 3.5km. Even Brezhnev planned a 30km evacuation zone around Chernobyl. ● Accident liability. The British government proposes to limit a private owner's accident liability to £140 million — versus £5 billion in the States. Were the American utility titan Duke Power to buy Britain's reactors and then suffer an accident, a £140 million payment would not cause the company to skip one dividend. Greg Palast is a US expert in regulated utilities.

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Not so wise counsel

26

Larry Elliott

SUCH, we are told, is the trauma caused by the news that "Take That are to split up that specially-trained counsellors are manning hotlines to prevent distraught teenagers from taking their lives. Counsellors? For fans of a pop group? Apparently it's true. Whereas teenagers in 1970 managed to cope with the break-up of the Beatles, and there was no surge in teeny-bop self-harm after the Bay City Rollers' demise, no part of society is now immune from counselling, the growth industry of the 1990s. This phenomenon is extraordinary, not least because a government that came to power 17 years ago committed to rugged independence has spawned a dependency culture in which an inability to share grief or problems with a "profession-

al" is seen as "denial". Moreover, a parental exhortation to "pull yourself together" is viewed as tantamount to child abuse. Over the past decade, counselling has grown from a cottage industry consisting of Marjorie Proops and Claire Rayner into a state-sponsored conglomerate. Even MI5 now has its own stress counsellor. Listen carefully the next time details of a serious road crash or nasty murder come on the radio. In suitably reverential terms, you will be told that trained counsellors are on hand. By whom are these counsellors trained? What are their qualifications? And what was wrong with the old system, where individuals dealt with grief themselves or through a network of family or friends? Interestingly, counselling fulfils the same function at a personal level as management consultancy does at the business level: putting a buffer between a problem and a solution. Indeed, there is a crossover between the two, with firms now appointing counsellors for staff faced with "distressed" customers. Few are prepared to denounce counselling as institutionalised busy-bodying — and it is a busy executive who will say that manage-

ment consultants are an expensive way of stating the blatantly obvious. The riposte to this is that the introduction of consultants has led to a quantum leap in management standards. But what has this so-called revolution actually amounted to apart from a blizzard of P45s and a strangled form of English? Managers who know their own businesses do not need to be told to "prioritise", even if such a verb exists. As far as the outsider can detect, the introduction of the BBC of profit centres, weekend training sessions and anger management courses has had no impact on the quality of programmes. And where were all the super-fit, mineral water drinking crowd when Ford airbrushed black faces out of one of its posters? An old-style 40-a-day personnel officer fresh from a boozy lunch would have spotted that one. The one piece of good news is that at least a reaction is setting in. During the Granada bid for Forte, a list was drawn up of the two sides' respective advisers. Forte was aided, if that's the right word, by management consultants. Granada had none. The company's boss, Gerry Robinson, says they are a "bloody waste of time". Take that.

Quick Crossword No. 8057

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Across

- Sexually abstinent (8)
- Stylish, elegant (4)
- Doctrine (5)
- Dishevelled (7)
- Motorway emergency lane (4,8)
- Watching (6)
- Lead (6)
- Guardian — delivered early! (7,5)
- Very heavy rain season (7)
- Asian republic (5)
- Small amphibian (4)
- Insignificant, not central (8)
- Chartered (5)
- Emptying out — glade (8)
- Launching (12)
- Person steering ship (8)
- German porcelain city (7)
- Programme (6)
- Renovate (5)
- Globe — dancing function (4)

Down

- Cipher (4)
- Traveller's trunks (7)
- Instrument producing identifying mark (8,4)
- Easily offended, irritable (5)

Solution No. 8056

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